



BEST FOR BOOKS

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Blow for patients awaiting surgery

Transplant of pig hearts to be banned

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

STEPHEN DORRELL will today announce a ban on pioneering surgery to transplant pig hearts to people after a government inquiry concluded that the procedure was too risky.

Doctors had hoped to carry out the first operations last autumn, but were forbidden to do so amid fears that the animal organs might carry viruses that could prove deadly to human beings.

Now the Health Secretary has decided that no trials involving people should take place yet, and that new laws are needed to establish a regulatory body to control experiments. An interim authority will be set up pending the legislation, which will have to wait until after the general election.

The decision will be a blow to thousands of people awaiting transplants, and especially to 25 Papworth Hospital patients who had been identified as the first potential recipients. The patients, who include cystic fibrosis sufferers, had been chosen from those showing an interest in receiving an animal organ if no human donor were available.

It will also be a great disappointment to the Cambridge-based company, Imutran, the world leader in the field, and it is possible that American, Japanese or Italian rivals might seize the lead.

Mr Dorrell reached his decision after an inquiry led by Professor Ian Kennedy of King's College London concluded that Imutran's work had not reached the stage



where it would be ethical to allow transplants to people. New laws were needed to control the work and a national regulatory body should be set up to approve experiments and monitor progress.

The inquiry backed the research into the use of animal organs — or xenotransplantation — but said it would not offer a quick answer to the global organ donor crisis — at least 6,000 people are waiting for transplants in Britain and five times that number are on waiting lists in America.

It also said that xenotransplants were too risky even to try experimentally. As well as the threat from animal viruses, there was too little evidence that animal organs would function for very long in their human hosts.

Mr Dorrell will tell MPs that he has accepted those findings and that an interim

authority will be established. A similar arrangement was made to control in-vitro fertilisation clinics in the 1980s before the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act was passed in 1990.

The Health Secretary will also announce a three-month consultation period on the Kennedy report before final decisions are taken.

One of the biggest concerns about the proposed transplants is that viruses which are harmless to pigs might prove deadly if transmitted to people and even trigger an epidemic. However, Imutran claims that tests on the genetically modified pigs bred specially for transplant have uncovered no pathogens or retroviruses that pose a threat to health. It also points out that heart valves and insulin from pigs have been used to treat people for decades.

Imutran was set up 12 years ago by the Cambridge University immunologist David White and John Wainwright, director of the transplant service at Papworth. In 1995 their team became the first in the world to transplant pig hearts into monkeys. A pig's heart would normally be rejected within minutes, but the monkeys were still alive 60 days later. A second series of transplants using kidneys last year convinced the doctors that they had overcome the first major hurdle of rejection, although further work is needed to overcome the second and third stages of the rejection process and to minimise the risks of disease transmission.



Jeremy Bates, right, Britain's last great tennis hope, joins fans cheering on Tim Henman in his match with Guillaume Raoux yesterday

Henman wins over new army of fans

By JOHN GOODBODY, SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT



Henman: success has generated a following

AS Tim Henman prepares to meet the American Michael Chang after his victory over Guillaume Raoux of France in the Australian Open, travel agents are preparing to cash in on the soaring popularity of the British player by organising trips to tennis tournaments across the world.

Just as there is huge interest in overseas cricket, rugby, football and athletics tours, so the recent performances of Henman, which have catapulted him to 14th ranking in the world, are opening up a new market. Suddenly, Britons have a tennis player worth

following. Mike Norris of Sportworld, Britain's leading specialist travel company, said Henman's growing success had generated enormous interest from fans.

"We are already working on the 1997 championships in Paris. We believe that because of Henman's success, there will be interest for both the French and the US Open and quite possibly other events on the professional tour."

"Many of our clients like the combination of watching a top-class sports event with a trip to an exotic location such as Paris or New York."

Henman's match early tomorrow will not be televised live in Britain. Highlights will be shown on Eurosport and BBC2.

Henman was cheered on yesterday by a vocal band of British fans similar to cricket's "Barney Army".

"I've been moving forward a lot more and that's been paying off," he said. Of Chang, he said: "He obviously has developed big shots into his game. But I do feel that if I can be aggressive, then maybe I can dictate."

Henman plots way, page 44



Chang in action in Australia yesterday

Princess tries to end mines row

Diana, Princess of Wales, has pleaded for an end to the political controversy over her support for a global ban on anti-personnel landmines.

Speaking during her visit to Angola on behalf of the Red Cross, the Princess said: "This is a distraction we did not need. All I'm trying to do is help." Page 3
Magnum Linklater, page 18

Manchester gets runway go-ahead

Ministers have given the go-ahead for a second runway at Manchester's Ringway Airport as part of a £170 million scheme opposed by green activists and nearby residents. The 10,000ft runway will attract 50,000 new jobs and make the airport Britain's second largest. Page 2

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Labour doubts threaten millennium showpiece

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE centrepiece of Britain's millennium celebrations was in serious jeopardy last night as Labour demanded the right to review the project on coming to office.

The Millennium Exhibition in Greenwich faced a new threat because it was feared that private investors needed to support it would be driven away by uncertainty over Labour's intentions.

Jack Cunningham, the Shadow Heritage Secretary, told the Shadow Cabinet last night he could not endorse the scaled-down project. Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, is backing Dr Cunningham in his extreme caution over the plan and agrees that there can be no blank cheques.

Millennium Commission sources said last night that the

review demand would drive away the private investors. One closely involved in the project said: "How are you meant to get sponsorship for a project which could be under review in two months? If Labour says it is committed to the project why is it putting it in jeopardy in this way?"

The Government wants to extend the life of the commission, which is running the project, for a year to enable more money from the National Lottery to underwrite the exhibition, whose cost has ballooned to £700 million from the original £200 million. But it says it will not put the necessary order before Parliament unless Labour guarantees to support it.

Dr Cunningham and his deputy Lewis Moonie are in-

sistent that a Labour government should be able to look at the project again if it comes to office in the spring.

Senior Labour sources said last night it was "utterly intolerable" that the Government should be seeking to put the onus on Labour for deciding whether or not the project went forward.

The revised budget put to Dr Cunningham yesterday was well over £100 million lower than the last — but Labour's fundamental demand is that it must have the right to look at the project in government. "That is the only prudent course we can take," a senior source said last night.

Some members of the Shadow Cabinet would prefer a series of exhibitions across the country.

Ford ready to axe one in three jobs

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND RUSSELL JENKINS

HUNDREDS of jobs are expected to be axed today at Ford's Halewood plant, for long a barometer of Merseyside's economic health and, for a generation, its dismal decline.

Up to 1,500 jobs of the 4,500-strong workforce are expected to go at the plant which once boasted 14,000 on the payroll and represented an engine for prosperity in the region.

Union leaders are arriving at Halewood today expecting to be told that the drastic restructuring plans, thrust out at Ford's Detroit headquarters, will mean the end of production of the Ford Escort at the plant and the end of the two-shift system.

The company wants to move to a single-shift system and is expected to "sell" the initiative at meetings this

morning as the only way to sustain activity at Halewood. It will tell workers that despite low labour costs, the plant is one of the least productive of Ford's sites in Europe.

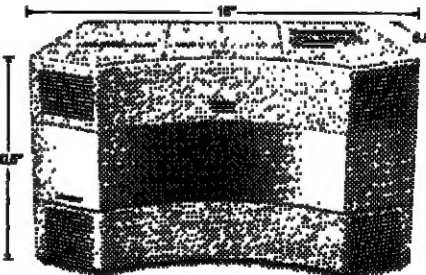
Production of the Escort could be lost to other centres in Spain and Germany within 18 months, leaving Halewood free to concentrate on a new Ford. The new version of the Escort is due by 1999 when management has said that it will be produced at fewer assembly sites. Ford management at Detroit has said that restructuring is necessary but has promised that closure is not on the agenda.

The Transport and General Workers Union refused to comment. It is not expected to recommend strike action.

Jobless down, page 25

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BOSE

Scots get housing problem from wrong Aberdeen

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THIRTY-three steel Nissen huts ordered by the US Army and designed to withstand a bomb blast at 30 feet are on their way across the Atlantic. They were sent to Aberdeen, Scotland, instead of Aberdeen, Maryland.

The latest additions to the granite city's skyline are making the 4,000-mile journey because of an American shipping company's error that has left the huts' British distributor with a big

problem. The company normally sells between three and eight of the buildings a week and Ron Beck, a director, was disconcerted to learn that up to three months' supply was coming in a single shipment.

The cargo ship carrying them was unable to turn back when the mistake was discovered because she was dropping off consignments at various ports. The huts are expected to reach Aberdeen — founded by Robert Bruce, and Scotland's third largest city with a population of 219,220 — within three

weeks. They were made in Baltimore and had been ordered for the US base at Aberdeen — founded by an Edmund Law Rogers in 1852, population 13,500 — six miles down the Maryland coast. The journey should have taken 30 minutes by road.

Now Mr Beck, of the Doncaster-based Blue Line Buildings, is trying to sell the arch-shaped huts to the citizens of Aberdeen. Yesterday he placed an advertisement in the local paper, *The Press & Journal*, inviting Aberdonians, who have a reputation for knowing a

barge when they see one, to buy them cheap.

The mistake happened when Mr Beck's firm ordered some huts to go to the military base in Maryland and others to go to an oil company in the Scottish Aberdeen. "There was a screw-up," he said. "I don't know how it happened, but there are far too many huts coming to Scotland. We have had words with the shipping company. I don't want to get them any more involved. They come from Pennsylvania: that is all I want to say about them."

Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares! A sketchwriter says his prayers

A small technical slip during Foreign Office Questions yesterday spoke volumes. Something went wrong with the sound-amplification system in the Commons Chamber. The fault was corrected in seconds, but it taught me something new.

Parliament's audio-system is antique but effective. Dangling from the high ceiling in the Chamber are scores of small microphones. No MP's mouth being, at any one time, too far from one of them. On a

lazy afternoon, as MPs shift and gape, the scene must be similar to the submarine view in a deep pond, as anglers' lines descend from the sky and dozens of old trout, opening and closing their mouths, eye the devices above with wary interest.

Boffins in a concealed box activate the microphones closest to whoever is speaking for as long as he speaks — then switch to the mikes nearest whoever replies.

Insert into the backs of all the benches, at ear level, are

hundreds of small loudspeakers, recessed behind ornate circular brass grilles smaller than soap dish. Individually they are muted, but the combined effect of some 500 of these is substantially to turn up the volume of the whole debate. When Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, speaks — or rather shouts — the volume reaches a level capable of perforating eardrums, and all but the stone deaf reach out in panic to muffle loudspeakers. Naturally, the automatic



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

amplification of the MP on his feet causes those reacting from a sedentary position to shout their heckles or hear-hears all the louder, turning up the volume of the background hubbub to match the speaker.

The consequence of this louder background noise is that speakers raise their own

volume to shout their audience. This causes the audience to raise the volume of jeers or cheers by a competing notch. The result is deafening.

Yesterday, while Labour's John Marek (Wrexham) was in mid-inquiry about British relations with Indonesia, his amplification suddenly failed. All at once, the volume

dropped. Dr Marek is not a rant, and for a moment the background noise in the Chamber (still adjusted for amplified sound) completely drowned this unshowy, rather rational speaker. Without his mike, he sank.

But not for long. Once the background writers realised the MP was now inaudible, they hushed their wittering. As our ears adjusted themselves to the new, subdued volume, Marek's voice regained our attention. Everybody else shut up. For the rest of his

Question, Marek enjoyed what, in 14 years at Westminster, he may never before have experienced: the sensation of being listened to by other MPs.

And I realised that there is no need for sound amplification in the Chamber. It is an intimate and surprisingly small place, there is no echo and the acoustics are good. The whole debate — complete with heckles and cheers — can be turned down to about a quarter of the volume at which, with amplification, it normally takes place. We can

still hear. Nothing is lost but the element of hysteria that goes with the shouting.

Perhaps the lesson has wider implications. If Tony Blair restricted himself to calling John Major disingenuous instead of "knee-deep in dishonour", maybe Mr Major could describe Mr Blair as changing his mind instead of betraying his principles: in which case Blair could call Major overcautious instead of spineless, and so on.

Just a thought; and one with not a snowball's chance in the months ahead.

Hygiene laws to be tightened after food poison scare

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH AND JAMES LANDALE

FOOD safety laws will be tightened and shop hygiene improved to combat future outbreaks of food poisoning in the wake of Scotland's *E. coli* 0157 epidemic which claimed 16 lives.

Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, yesterday published the results of an interim report by Professor Hugh Pennington, a senior microbiologist at Aberdeen University, and said he would make the resources available to implement many of the recommendations. There would be consultation on others. "The protection of public health is paramount," he said.

The 14-page report emphasised the need for further research into the deadly *E. coli* 0157 bacterium, called for improvements to disease surveillance systems, a tightening of existing food safety legislation and guidelines, and better systems for tackling any future crisis. The full report is expected next month.

However, the report stopped short of criticising the local authorities for their handling of the crisis and made no mention of the need for a separate food standards agency, which has been urged by Labour and the Scottish Consumer Council. The much-criticised five-day delay in the local authority's release of a list of outlets supplying suspect meat was referred to only obliquely in a call to place public health above commercial interests when issuing warnings.

Paul Santoni, the solicitor representing families of the victims, said the interim report left many questions unanswered. He was surprised that no criticism had been directed at the handling of the crisis by the authorities involved.

"On the ground there is a definite feeling that more could have been done to alleviate the pain and suffering," he said. "This is the most

virulent form of *E. coli* with the most significant effect on people. We want to know when the authorities identified this organism and when they started to take steps to prevent further spread to the public."

George Robertson, the Shadow Scottish Secretary, welcomed the report but asked why the Government had turned down earlier requests for research funding. He said it seemed to have taken the deaths of 16 people for ministers to act. "Is this not the classic way this Government treats every crisis it faces — ignore medical advice, react to



Forsyth pledged more funding for research

events rather than shaping them, and always too little, too late."

Mr Forsyth rejected claims that the report's call for such widening changes could be seen as criticism of the Scottish Office's reaction to the outbreak. He also dismissed Labour calls for a food management agency as a way of helping to prevent further epidemics.

The report said research should be carried out as soon as possible into the prevalence of *E. coli* 0157 in Scottish animals, how it is transmitted, what its future incidence might be, and possible improvements to current DNA-based methods of identifying

it. Mr Forsyth refused to say how much this would cost but said he would find resources for all necessary research.

The report also called for changes to food legislation to minimise public health risks. These included consulting the industry on possible new licences for village shops and butchers which handle raw and cooked meat but which are not covered by existing meat hygiene regulations. New laws would also be considered for the physical separation of counters, equipment and staff on the same premises to prevent cross-contamination.

In a statement to the Commons, Mr Forsyth said that the recommendations had far-reaching implications which he had instructed officials to examine in consultation with consumers, health professionals, environmental health officers and retailers. He later indicated, however, that the Government had yet to decide if licensing was the best way forward.

Mr Forsyth told MPs: "Good lines of communication from local to central government, and timely release by local outbreak control teams of information to the public, are crucial."

Sixteen pensioners died and more than 400 people reported symptoms of the *E. coli* 0157 infection during Scotland's five-week food poisoning epidemic, the second worst on record in the world. No new cases have emerged in the past three weeks, according to the outbreak control team, led by Dr Syed Ahmed, consultant in public health medicine at Lanarkshire Health Board, the worst affected area.

However, one child is still in hospital in Glasgow and three elderly adults, who fell ill in the early stages of the epidemic, are receiving treatment in hospital in Airdrie. None is giving cause for concern.



Bishop Holloway has invoked a power rarely used

Church in Scotland bars 'flying bishop'

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE head of the Anglican Church in Scotland has banned one of the Archbishop of Canterbury's "flying bishops" from the pulpit to prevent further splits over the ordination of women priests.

The Most Rev Richard Holloway, Bishop of Edinburgh and Primate of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, has invoked a power rarely used under Canon Law to ban The Rt Rev Edwin Barnes from preaching or acting as a priest in Scottish Episcopal churches next month.

The Bishop Suffragan of Richborough is an opponent of women priests and is one of three Church of England bish-

ops appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to minister to traditionalists opposed to the ordination of women. The Scottish Episcopal Church, which is independent of the Church of England, has around 60 women priests and has not appointed "flying bishops" believing it would create a church within a church.

Bishop Barnes was originally invited to Scotland by the Rev Paul Harvie, rector at St Salvador's Church in Dundee to preach on February 3 at the traditional Candlemas service. Father Harvie, 60, said the invitation to Bishop Barnes had had nothing to do with the ordination of women.

Bishop Barnes, who is attending the Church of England's house of bishops meeting in Liverpool, last night said he was surprised at the ban. "I found it a little odd. This sort of thing does not exist in other parts of the Anglican communion."

"I was not going as a bishop," he said, emphasising that he was going in a private capacity to talk about the situation as he understood it in the Anglican communion and to preach a straightforward Candlemas sermon.



Bishop Barnes: he was surprised by the ban

Manchester wins go-ahead for second-busiest airport

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

MINISTERS gave the go-ahead yesterday to a new runway for Manchester Airport, allowing it to become Britain's second busiest after Heathrow. The £170 million scheme is strongly opposed by green activists and by residents under the flight path.

The 3,050-metre second runway, running roughly parallel to the existing one, is forecast to attract 50,000 new jobs to the region and to handle 30 million passengers a year. John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, promised an "impressive package of proposals to reduce the ecological impact."

Environmental campaigners are expected to push for a

judicial review, while more extreme groups are threatening that two warriors are ready to stand in the way of the bulldozers across a swathe of Cheshire countryside to the south and east of the airport. Houses dating from 1620 are in the path.

The decision follows a 101-day public inquiry. Neil Hamilton, Tory MP for Tatton in Cheshire, said he was dismayed: "I am pleased that some environmental safeguards have been imposed, but they are not likely to be adequate."

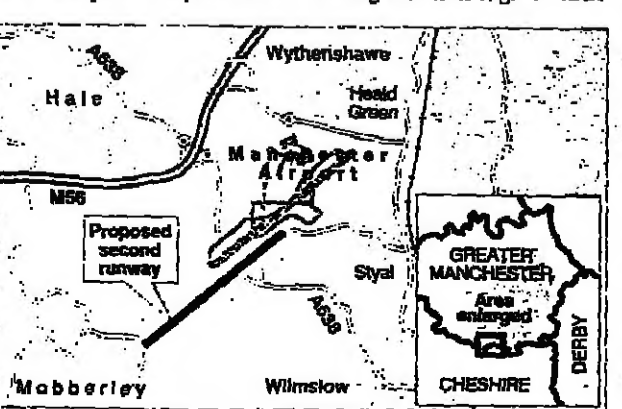
He claimed that the runway would be viable only with round-the-clock flying: "Manchester must not become the dumping ground for all the night charter flights which

cannot fly from Heathrow and Gatwick, where there are strict controls on numbers. My constituents deserve as much consideration as the residents of Berkshire and Sussex. I shall continue the fight to ensure that the runway is never built."

The Shadow Environment Secretary, Frank Dobson, welcomed the go-ahead to provide "a real boost to jobs and economic development in the North West."

The airport is owned by Greater Manchester's ten councils. The runway will be used mostly for departures, leaving the existing runway for arrivals. If one is out of service, then the other will be brought into play for both procedures so that the airport will never have to close.

Councillor Graham Stringer, chairman of the Manchester Airport Board, said that work would begin in the Spring, and that campaigners had exaggerated the environmental impact. He added: "The airport is already acknowledged as the economic motor of the region. The second runway is the biggest post-war economic boost to the region. It will create 50,000 new jobs — the equivalent employment potential of ten Nissan car plants."



Santer denies giving in over BSE

BY CHARLES BRENNER AND LEYLA LINTON

THE President of the European Commission yesterday denied giving in to "blackmail" by Britain in the BSE crisis and announced a shake-up in the Commission that will curb the powers of the agriculture division.

Jacques Santer was defending himself in Strasbourg against charges by a European Parliament investigation that he had surrendered to pressure from John Major last spring for a rapid easing of the embargo against British beef. The committee of inquiry alleged that Mr Santer acted last April under British pressure to lift the embargo on gelatine and other by-products although there was not enough scientific justification for the move.

"I had a lot of difficulty with the British and I was often threatened but I never gave in," he said. "I refused to allow myself to be influenced by political considerations or to give in to blackmail." The subsequent refusal of EU states to agree to the Commission proposal triggered Britain's campaign of non-cooperation in EU business which ended at the Florence summit last June.

The blackmail charge was one of a battery of accusations by the committee against the Commission and Britain over the epidemic since the late 1980s. Visibly uncomfortable under questioning, Mr Santer denied the committee's findings that the Commission had consistently played down the gravity of BSE and connived with Britain in avoiding publicity that could damage the beef market.

He said he could not speak for the period before he arrived at the Commission in January last year, but he was convinced that "we would not have given priority to the market to the detriment of public health or carried out a deliberate policy of disinformation." He allowed, however, that "the Commission must accept criticism."

To end the confusion of priorities that arose in the BSE affair, the Brussels Commission would be reorganised to bring the control of food safety under separate management, probably under the consumer affairs division. Under the existing system, the agriculture section bears responsibility for the consumer health aspects of the industry.

Abbott renews attack on racism in NHS

Diane Abbott has renewed her attack on racism in the NHS by saying that black nurses are excluded from the best hospital jobs. The Labour MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington said that inexperienced graduates were forcing hard-working black nurses out of management positions.

Miss Abbott was criticised last year for denouncing the recruitment of "blonde, blue-eyed British girls" to Homerton Hospital, Hackney, instead of nurses from the Caribbean. In the *Nursing Standard* she says she wished the Royal College of Nursing put as much energy into defending its black members as it did in criticising her remarks. The RCN pointed to its "race and ethnicity committee. Gerald Malone, the Health Minister, demanded that Tony Blair take disciplinary action against Ms Abbott for claiming racism is driving black nurses out of the NHS.

Fears over nuclear dump

Plans for a nuclear dump near Sellafield have been put in doubt by the leaking of an internal document showing serious concerns about its viability. The memo, by a senior scientist at UK Nirex — the company responsible for disposing of nuclear waste — indicates that scientists working on the scheme are split over the best way to assess the safety of the proposed dump. The scheme is seen as vital for tackling increasing levels of nuclear waste. The document shows that to prove underground dumping is safe between 10 and 100 times more scientific data may be needed. The company has spent £200 million on the plan.

Long stretch for jail ship

A floating jail will be needed for at least three years to meet the accommodation crisis facing jails in England and Wales, the Prison Service admitted yesterday. Officials want to hold about 500 men on board the floating vessel which they plan to have moored in Portland harbour, Dorset, by end of March. Negotiations are under way to acquire the *Resolution*, currently moored in the Hudson River near New York.

Parent course sold out

A course on parenting, including lessons on how to discipline children without smacking them, has sold out. The seven-week programme, run by health workers in east Berkshire, was organised after a survey showed that 90 per cent of mothers and fathers found it difficult to be parents. More than 30 people have signed up for the £10 courses in Maidenhead, Bracknell and Windsor. They will be taught how to encourage, listen and talk to children.

Man seen with Zoe

Zoe Evans, the nine-year-old girl missing since Friday, may have been abducted by a shaven-headed man who was seen talking to her in a supermarket car park, police said last night. The man, in his late teens or early twenties, was later spotted walking closely behind Zoe down a footpath. The sightings, both around lunchtime on Saturday and within a mile of Zoe's home in Warminster, Wiltshire, were by two people who knew her by name.

Three shot in siege

Armed police surrounded a cottage close to the border with Northern Ireland yesterday after a German man allegedly shot a sheriff and his two officials who had called to evict him. Gerrit Isenberger apparently shot and injured Thomas Owens, the Cavan County registrar and sheriff, and his two officials as they arrived at the house outside the village of Bawnboy. Herr Isenberger lives there with his elderly mother. The siege was continuing last night.

Rock star to fight poll

Donnie Munro, lead singer of the Highland Gaelic rock group Runrig, will be officially endorsed on Monday as Labour's candidate to fight Charles Kennedy, the Liberal Democrat, in Ross, Skye and Inverness West at the general election. Mr Munro, who was brought up in Skye, is the sole nominee for the Labour candidacy in the Highlands and Islands seat. The ballot result and his acceptance is a formality. Poll date speculation, page 10

Prison advisers praised

The Princess Royal praised "the creation of a full-time Citizens Advice Bureau at Wexhamwood Prison in west London. Seventy prisoners a month and some staff contact workers at the bureau. The Princess talked to a prisoner who was receiving advice on how he could get his sentence reduced. Officers left the cell as the Princess listened while the inmate met two CAB advisers.

US custody fight begins

Pauline and Ray Meadows of Poole, Dorset, have begun a transatlantic legal battle in an effort to gain custody of their grandchild. The couple whose daughter, Jenny, died in the United States in 1992, are trying to raise £5,000 to hire an American lawyer to fight for custody of their granddaughter, Jessica Kerwin, 5. The Meadows made a preliminary application to a court in Camden County, New Jersey.

First Irish divorce case

A terminally ill husband has become the first man to seek a divorce in the Irish High Court. The 58-year-old from Dublin wants to divorce his first wife and marry the woman with whom he lives. He claims he is entitled to a divorce under the Constitution. In November 1995, Ireland voted by a tiny majority to allow divorce in certain circumstances. The law comes into effect on February 27.

In the Diary piece "Off the road" (December 26) we incorrectly referred to Michael Hutchence "facing charges of opium possession". He does not, and no decision has yet been made by the Crown Prosecution Service whether to press charges. We apologise to Mr Hutchence.

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Princess dismisses critics of anti-mine campaign

BY ALICE THOMSON AND INGO GILMORE

DIANA, Princess of Wales, pleaded yesterday for an end to the political rumpus over her support for a global ban on anti-personnel landmines.

Speaking in Huambo during her visit to Angola on behalf of the Red Cross, which is campaigning for such a ban, the Princess said: "This is a distraction we did not need. All I'm trying to do is help."

In Britain, a defence minister admitted having spoken with journalists from two newspapers that had carried reports of ministerial anger at the Princess's remarks. However, Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, led a government move to calm things down.

Mr Rifkind said that the Princess's views differed little from government policy. Mr Rifkind said: "We support a multilateral universal ban on landmines. We don't export any landmines."

Earl Howe, an Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Defence, admitted that he had had lunch on Tuesday with journalists from *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*.

The newspapers said yesterday that one unnamed minister had called her a "loose cannon". Lord Howe insisted that he did not recognise the views referred to in the reports.

In a statement Lord Howe said that he had the "greatest admiration for her work". *The Times* stands by its report.

Several Tory MPs joined in the argument, expressing anger with the Princess for becoming involved in the Red Cross campaign.

However, Downing Street insisted that her reported remarks



The 7th Earl Howe, left, is one of the Government's most gentle and conscientious ministers (Alice Thomson writes). Until yesterday, when he acknowledged that he was the unnamed minister accused of criticising Diana, Princess of Wales, the junior Defence Minister had studiously avoided controversy.

Like many peers, Frederick Richard Penn Curzon rarely courts the press and is usually muddled up with the former Chancellor, Lord Howe of Aberavon. Although he was educated at Rugby and Christ Church, Oxford, he has risen through the ranks using his quiet, gentlemanly charm, rather than dazzling intellect. He spends hours poring over briefs and shrugs off hostile questioning at the dispatch box with a quiet smile and a list of facts.

At 45, he is the head of a distinguished naval family. He has three children, runs a dairy farm in Buckinghamshire and spent years at Bardsley Bank before becoming involved in politics. Since John Major became Prime Minister, Lord Howe has served as a whip and a frontbench spokesman on employment, transport, the environment, agriculture and defence.

were "not inconsistent" with government policy. The Government's policy is that the sort of mine found in Angola should be banned but that "smartmines" which self-destruct after a limited life should be available to defend troops.

Peter Viggers, a Tory MP and member of the Commons Defence Select Committee, said that the Princess was "very ill-informed" about the landmines and that there was a case for Britain retaining the right to use them. Comparing the Princess's stance to "Brigitte Bardot's concern for 'cats'", he said: "It doesn't actually add much to the sum of human knowledge."

"This is an important, sophisticated argument. It doesn't help simply to point at the armpits and say how terrible it is," he said.

David Howell, Tory chairman of the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, was more measured but made clear that the Princess should not be given any official ambassadorial role of the sort that has been mooted.

Mike Whitlam, director-general of the British Red Cross, who is accompanying the Princess on her Angolan visit, said it was being undertaken with the support of the Foreign Office and Buckingham Palace in visiting Angola and that she had been fully briefed. Standing next to the Princess by a minefield, he described the criticism of her as "a bit of mischief".

"She's not a loose cannon" Mr Whitlam said. "The Princess, like many others, wants anti-personnel mines banned. We don't accept that she's going against government policy."

Roger Hart, the British Ambassador to Angola, yesterday praised the Princess's visit.

Labour and the Liberal Democrats which both want an immediate ban on landmines, backed the Princess's stance.

In Huambo, the locals stood by bemusedly as the Princess, in a protective visor and vest, walked

through a carefully cleared area to detonate an East German PPM2 mine by remote control. She smiled and spoke with the British military officers from the Halo Trust, which has been operating in Huambo for the past 18 months, clearing mines laid by both government and Unita rebel forces during the 20-year civil war. The Princess also met mine victims at the city's hospital.

Earlier yesterday, she rescheduled her itinerary to fit in a brief visit to the war-ravaged city of Cuilo and was briefed about the efforts of a British de-mining team who were clearing 500 mines a month. Asked about comments that she was a "loose cannon", she replied that she was just highlighting a problem that existed all over the world.

Asked about suggestions that her stand on landmines might be construed as pro-Labour, she replied: "I'm sorry, I don't know what you're talking about."



Diana, Princess of Wales, in Angola yesterday with the Halo Trust mine-clearing team

Prince signs £1.3m deal to make TV series

FROM QUENTIN TARENTINO IN NEW YORK

PRINCE EDWARD, 37, signed a seven-figure deal yesterday to make television documentaries for an American broadcaster for the next two years.

The Prince, who was at a television trade conference in New Orleans, announced that he will present a series made by his London-based Ardent Productions for CBS. The value of the 24-month contract was said by sources to be about £1.3 million.

The contract is for up to 12 documentaries which will take their lead from *Edward on Edward* which the Prince made about Edward VIII. Prince Edward was said to be "absolutely delighted" at the deal. The programmes will be distributed worldwide.

A television industry source said yesterday: "This is a pretty amazing deal for anyone with a small production company. It should help to raise Ardent from being just one of hundreds of production companies into a bigger player. The Prince has good reason to be pleased."

It confounds those sceptics who speculated that Ardent was struggling to survive and it may give the Prince — who uses the name Edward Windsor professionally — a "public recognition factor" in America, where celebrity brings high financial rewards.

The Duchess of York, announcing her appointment as a spokeswoman for WeightWatchers yesterday, confessed that she was once hooked on sausage rolls and used to be so plump that she became stuck in a gate. Her one-year deal is said to be worth about £650,000.

Court backing for family claiming rent on luxury flat

BY IAN MURRAY, COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

AN ASIAN family living on income support have won High Court backing for their claim to be paid housing benefit covering the full rental of a luxury flat to which they moved through fear of racial harassment.

The court was told that Asmat Sheikh, 41, decided two years ago to move to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea because she believed her home in the east London borough of Redbridge was no longer a safe place to live.

Mr Justice Latham said Mrs Sheikh, her 10-year-old daughter, Leila, and mother, Mulama Sultana, had been subjected to burglaries which had left them nervous and afraid to sleep at night. Leila's education was affected after she saw frightening racist behaviour, including a violent attack on her cousin in the school playground. He ordered the council to reconsider the family's claim.

The judge said: "They decided to move to a place of greater safety and the only area where they were able to, they said, obtain the security which they required, with security cameras and porter or guard on the premises, was in the centre of London in an area which was the responsibility of the royal borough, and which, by its very nature, would be expensive accommodation."

The family first moved into a three-bedroom flat on the edge of Belgravia in February 1995, paying a £2,535 deposit. They submitted a claim for housing benefit for the £498-a-week rent. But they were told by the council that they were entitled to only £295 a week.

The following August, with

rent arrears escalating, they moved to a two-bedroom flat near Sloane Square. This time they were asked for a £1,300 deposit and four weeks' rent — a further £1,200. The council agreed the family should be paid £240 a week in housing benefit towards the £300 rent. On each occasion the family appealed unsuccessfully for the full amount to the council's housing benefit review board.

The judge ruled that, in the first case, there was no requirement on the council to offer them some form of security "over and above the ordinary security which any householder is entitled to in his premises".

He said: "They had moved from Redbridge where, as a matter of fact, rentals for the required type of accommodation are measured in the hundreds, not two hundreds, per week. Kensington and Chelsea is also an area with which they have no connection whatsoever, with no family ties, and therefore they have no justification for saying that was the only area with which the board could make its appropriate comparisons."

In the second case, however, the review board had failed to explain to the family why it rejected the claim that "suitable accommodation" should include a block with security cameras and a porter. He said the board had failed to address the problem of Leila's education given that she was happily settled into a new school in the area.

Because of this he ordered that the claim should be reheard by a new board. The council is considering an appeal.

Chilling conclusion for life, the universe and everything

FROM DAN FALK IN TORONTO AND NIGEL HAWKES

THE forecast for the universe is cold, and getting colder. It will end as a dark place inhabited only by a flotilla of elementary particles moving across a vast expanse of space. No stars, no life, not even any atoms will disturb this utterly featureless expanse.

Peering into the remote future in more detail than astronomers ever have before, American researchers yesterday described a universe in which, over unimaginably long timescales, stars and planets will give way to black holes and, ultimately, to fundamental particles.

Dr Gregory Laughlin and Dr Fred Adams of Michigan University presented their forecast to the American Astronomical Society in Toronto. They believe that the universe will go on expanding for ever, rather than collapsing

in a reversal of the Big Bang with which it began.

"We are taking physical laws as we understand them and working out the logical consequences to develop a rigorous quantitative theory of the future," Dr Adams said.

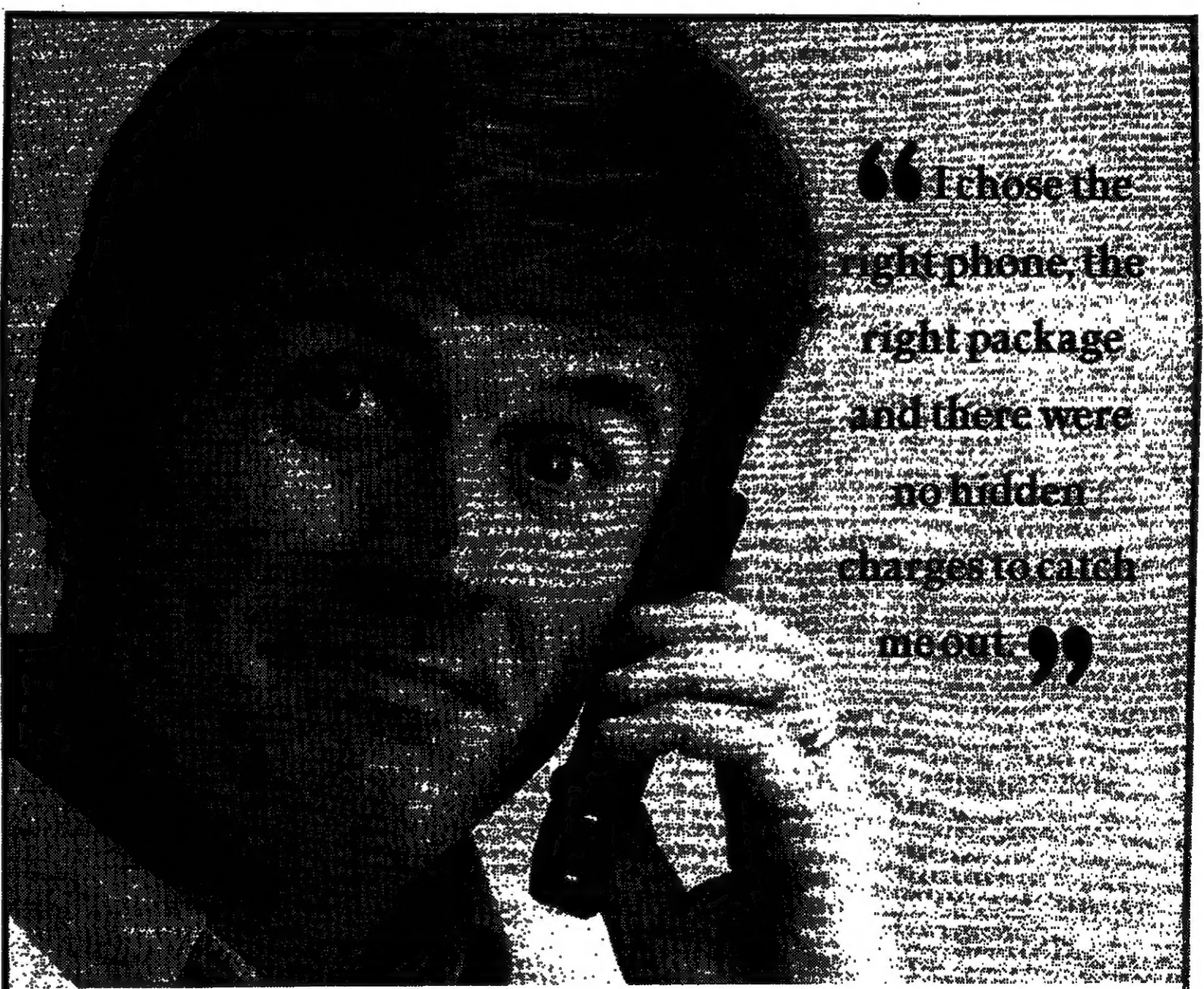
The timescales are so large they have divided the universe into cosmological "decades", each ten times longer than the one before. Our solar system formed 10,000 million years after the Big Bang — one followed by ten naughts — marking the start of the tenth cosmological decade in the history of the universe. We are in that decade.

Over many more millions of years all Sun-like stars will have evolved into white dwarf stars, and by the fourteenth decade — 100 million million years from now — all star formation will have ceased.

By the fortieth decade, even the protons that make up matter will have decayed and the only large objects in the universe will be black holes. At this point, carbon-based life will be impossible.

Eventually even the black holes will disappear, radiating away their energy by a process first described by the British physicist Stephen Hawking. In its final stage, the universe will be reduced to nothing more than elementary particles in the vast, dark expanse of space.

This state, however, lies beyond the hundredth cosmological decade — one followed by 100 naughts. Dr Laughlin said: "If you're interested strictly in your mortgage, certainly by the time proton decay happens the mortgage will no longer be an important part of the universe."



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Don't punish the innocent.



Dunblane was a terrible tragedy. But the Government's response to the wickedness of Thomas Hamilton – the new Firearms Bill – is grossly unfair to thousands of decent people. It is scapegoating law abiding sportsmen and women for a crime they did not commit and the horror of which they deplore.

The Bill now going through Parliament won't protect the public from madmen or armed criminals. Nor will it stop the flood of illegal weapons pouring into the Britain.¹ It won't prevent youngsters or other vulnerable people from watching violent videos or curb excessive violence on TV and in films.² It is pre-election theatre – doing what looks good rather than doing what works; politicians seeking votes rather than real solutions.

The Firearms Bill will:

- Destroy a popular, safe and well regulated sport enjoyed by tens of thousands including police officers, ex servicemen and women, the disabled and Olympic and Commonwealth competitors.
- Confiscate private property on an unprecedented scale.
- Wreck hundreds of small businesses and put 2000 people out of work.
- Cost the taxpayer at least £400 million (possibly much more) – the equivalent of 100 new schools, 3 major hospitals or thousands of police on the beat.

1. There are probably 5-10 times the number of illegally held handguns in Britain as licensed ones.
2. The average rental video in the Top Ten now has 13 firearms killings in it and 6 killings by other means.

The Sportsman's Association
fighting for fair, effective law

Last Saturday 10,000 sportsmen and women marched in central London. They asked for traditional British fair play. That the innocent should not be punished for the crimes of the guilty.

Don't punish the innocent!

After Dunblane the Government appointed a distinguished judge, Lord Cullen, to examine existing firearms laws. His main recommendations have been ignored. Our politicians once again are failing to learn the lessons of tragedy, preferring ill thought out gestures to implementing the advice of experts.

Instead of banning law abiding people from owning firearms for sport we need laws and policies that address the real issues.

There is an urgent need for:

- A national Firearms Control Board staffed by specialists.
- A computerised National Firearms register.
- Effective action against illegal guns.
- Better and properly monitored police procedures.
- Improved screening of firearm certificate applicants.

**The Firearms Amendment Bill will not work.
It does not deserve to become law.**

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Mother fights to bring children home from cult

FROM LEONARD PORT IN LISBON

A British judge in a custody case in 1984 criticised Nadine Scott for being "totally unqualified in matters of childcare". The court was told that her

Mr Rankine, her solicitor, said last night: "The legal position is simple. The mother has custody and has nothing to do with Nadine Scott."

BY JOANNA BAE AND CAROL MIDGLEY

Before her problems at Morgan Grenfell, the only hitch in her otherwise perfect life appears to have come seven years ago when her

reminds me of Mrs Tiggy-winkle when she's with the little ones."

Husband sued page 23

Nicola Horlick, likened by a neighbour to Mrs Tiggerwinkle with her children

The Horlicks' home in Stafford Terrace.

Privately educated at Birkenhead High School and Balliol College, Oxford, where she achieved a second-class degree in law, she came to the City by way of a year selling

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*When you connect to Cellnet Digital Line Advance. Connection fee is paid on first bill. **When you connect to Cellnet Digital Line Advance. Connection fee is paid in store. †When you connect to Cellnet Analogue Line Advance. When compared to normal monthly charge of £79.99 plus cost of phone at £9.99 = £225.87. Total saving £61.38. ‡When you connect to One to One. §When you connect to Orange. ¶When you connect to Talk 25. Connection to mobile phones is subject to status. A deposit may be required. Ask in-store for details.

Match-rigging trial jury shown video of Grobbelaar 'blindens' in draw against Manchester United



Bruce Grobbelaar arriving at court yesterday for the second day of the trial

Two spectacular saves 'cost keeper £125,000 fixing fee'

By LIN JENKINS

THE Liverpool goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar made two "blinding" saves in a tightly fought game against Manchester United that cost him £125,000 from a Far Eastern betting syndicate, a court was told yesterday.

The prosecuting counsel in the match-rigging trial at Winchester Crown Court said that the player boasted to a former business associate that it would have been his largest single payment for fixing a match, had he succeeded. But he had also conceded that he was his own worst enemy because he hated to lose.

Video footage of the saves during the game in January, 1994, was shown to the jury. Mr Grobbelaar was seen diving to his left to deflect a shot by Ryan Giggs and to his right to reach another from Roy Keane.

David Calvert-Smith, for the prosecution, said that in a secretly taped conversation littered with expletives, Mr Grobbelaar recalled how things had gone wrong. "I could have done something," he said, "it was in the second half I made two blinding saves. I dived the wrong way. I just went and it just hit my hand. Do you know how much I lost - £125,000 pounds in cash."

Manchester United had been 3-1 up, but the final result

at Anfield had been a 3-3 draw. Mr Calvert-Smith said: "If this was the big one, and Mr Grobbelaar had been hoping to do enough to make Liverpool lose, he had failed because it was a draw."

He said Mr Grobbelaar, who is now with Plymouth Argyle, had made £40,000 when Liverpool lost to Newcastle in November, 1993. But the Manchester United game was one of four in which the result had not gone as planned. Mr Grobbelaar had perhaps given his own explanation on tape, when he was speaking to Christopher Vincent, a fellow Zimbabwean: "I know I'm my worst enemy. It is because I don't like to lose. It's instinct."

In a game against Norwich on February 5, 1994, Liverpool had again failed to lose, drawing 2-2. Mr Grobbelaar had said that he saved the ball through instinctive reactions, his left knee getting to a shot from Jeremy Goss.

The jury watched a video of the save and of a game the following season when Mr Grobbelaar had moved to Southampton. Mr Calvert-Smith said that this time he claimed to have tried to affect the result by helping Coventry to win. Southampton had won 3-1 despite Mr Grobbelaar claiming to have put the ball in his own goal. "Two minutes

after kick-off I pushed the ball in the back of the net and then it steamrollered - 1-0 down at half-time and then it steamrollered," he had said.

The video showed Dion Dublin's shot at goal from outside the area and the goalkeeper jumping, just getting his fingertips to the ball before it continued its flight into the net.

Mr Calvert-Smith said: "Grobbelaar is explaining that he had been told they had to lose the Coventry game, that he pushed the ball in the back of the net to make it 1-0 to Coventry and then, through no fault of his, Southampton scored three and it's a 3-1 win. It is the clearest possible admission by Grobbelaar that the Coventry match was part of the scheme."

In the dock with Mr Grobbelaar, 39, are the Dutch-born former Wimbledon goalkeeper Hans Segers, 34, and the former Wimbledon and England striker John Fashanu, 33, who is now a presenter of *Gladiators* on television. The prosecution claims Mr Segers also received money to throw games while Mr Fashanu is said to have been a go-between with the betting syndicate.

Accused with them is Heng Suan Lim, 30, a Malaysian businessman who is said to be the syndicate's British link. All



Lim: said to be the link with betting syndicate

Mr Fashanu, Mr Grobbelaar and Mr Lim. While it could not be known what was discussed, it was likely, given the evidence of the tape recordings, that it was "which match to put a lot of money on and clean up".

Grobbelaar had also met Mr Lim. Mr Calvert-Smith said. The night before the Norwich game he had slipped out of the team hotel and driven to a meeting with him at the Hilton hotel in Park Lane, London. Mr Lim had gone to that game and Mr Grobbelaar had said after the match to Mr Vincent that "the short man would be as mad as a snake" because Liverpool had not lost.

The prosecution said that police investigations found that £254,007 from Asia was deposited in nominee accounts controlled by Mr Fashanu in the name of his girlfriend, now wife, Melissa Kassa-Mapsi, a friend, Peter Buckell, and a cousin, Miss S. Alao, who lived in Tanzania, between 1991 and his arrest in 1995.

While there was no direct evidence against Mr Segers, who is alleged to have been involved while goalkeeper at Wimbledon, his telephone bills showed numerous calls to Mr Lim and Mr Fashanu, especially around the dates of matches. A Swiss branch of an American bank had £160,000 in his account.

The case continues.

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Bombing suspect freed in Ireland

By AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

A TELEVISION actor wanted in connection with an IRA attack on a British Army base in Germany has been released from prison by the Irish Justice Minister, who said that she had no authority to extradite him to Germany.

James Corry, 28, was to have stood trial in Germany on charges relating to the



Corry: now in Dublin

triple mortar attack on an army base in Osnabrück last June. Nora Owen, the Irish Justice Minister, said that she could not extradite Mr Corry because he claimed Irish citizenship. Although a native of Belfast, he is entitled under the Irish Constitution to Irish citizenship and an Irish passport. Under the Republic's law, its citizens cannot be extradited unless there is an extradition treaty with the country seeking the suspect, and Ireland has no such treaty with Germany.

Mr Corry, who played an RUC officer in the BBC2 drama *The Precious Blood*, was released from Portlaoise prison late on Tuesday. Police sources said that he went to "somewhere on Dublin's northside". However, he is no longer under police surveillance and will not be rearrested as he is not wanted for any offence in the Republic.

Setback for Harrods on name sale

By ROBIN YOUNG

HARRODS suffered a defeat yesterday in its High Court attempt to stop a formerly associated company in South America from selling its name. Mr Justice Neuberger ruled that there was no licence or contract to stop Harrods (Buenos Aires) Ltd from dealing in the name.

Harrods in Buenos Aires was opened as a branch of the Knightsbridge store in 1912, but was subsequently sold to an independent company called Harrods (South America) Ltd. It is the only other shop in the world permitted to trade under the Harrods name.

The judge's ruling means that, unless it can win an appeal, the London store's hopes of curbing its South American counterpart must rest on action for alleged "passing off", which will not be heard for at least another six months.

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CONNECTIONS

SUN ALLIANCE

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

[illegible]

Policeman injured in car chase wins £286,000 payout

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A POLICEMAN whose career ended when he was injured pursuing a stolen vehicle was awarded nearly £286,000 damages in the High Court yesterday. The judgment is believed to be the first of its kind.

Craig Langley suffered spine and knee injuries after skidding on ice and hitting a lamppost during the car chase in 1991. He has been unable to work since the accident and was discharged from the police force on medical grounds in 1993.

John Mitting, QC, the deputy judge, ruled that Mr Langley was owed a duty of care by the driver of the stolen car, Kirk Dray, and that the accident would not have happened if he had stopped when first ordered to do so.

He said the case raised for the first time whether or not a police officer was entitled to damages from the driver of a stolen car if he sustained injuries during the pursuit. He said the facts of the case were not in dispute: Dray, of

Stechford, Birmingham, was convicted in 1992 of taking the vehicle without consent and driving recklessly.

During the five-mile chase through the suburbs of Birmingham, Dray tried to lose the three police cars following him and admitted that he had driven at high speed, had ignored one-way street signs and red traffic lights. The pursuit came to an end at a T-junction when Dray burst a tyre on a kerb after skidding on black ice. Mr Langley's car struck a nearby lamp standard.

The judge said Dray had the same duty of care to other road users as any other motorist. It was "wholly reasonable" for Mr Langley to recover damages from Dray because of his bad driving. Another "powerful reason" to uphold the claim was that police officers should be encouraged to perform their duty in pursuing criminals without fearing that, if injured, they would be "with-out effective remedy".

The damages will be paid by

the insurance syndicate MT Motor Policies, which had insured the car's owner. It was liable under the Road Traffic Act even though the car had been stolen. The company, a Lloyd's of London syndicate, is to appeal.

The judge said that Mr Langley, who was 36 when he was injured, had been a career police officer praised by his superiors as hard-working, enthusiastic and the type of officer who formed the backbone of the service. Because of his injuries, he now suffered continual pain in his neck despite extensive treatment and was likely to experience discomfort for the rest of his life.

The West Midlands branch of the Police Federation said that it was delighted by the court's decision. Stuart Nicholls, its chairman, said: "If, in the future, officers lose their jobs under these circumstances, they will at least be able to retrieve some compensation from those who cause it."

Ministers shown life on mean streets of Hackney

BY IAN MURRAY
COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

THREE government ministers were shown how to smash down a front door and where to find a prostitute yesterday as part of a crash course in what life is like on an inner-city housing estate. Unscripted interludes included getting stuck in a lift and being sworn at by a pensioner whose flat needed repairing.

Their host was Hackney council in east London, which covers some of Britain's most deprived areas and notorious estates, but the initiative for the meeting came from 40 housing authorities around the country which are now working together to curb crime on estates. The three

Gary Streeter from the Lord Chancellor's Department, Timothy Kirkhope, a junior Home Office minister, and James Clappison, from the Environment Department, toured estates while being lectured on the need for ministers involved in housing to work more closely to combat crime, vandalism and



We got rhythm: Timothy Kirkhope and Gary Streeter join a youth group on an estate in Stamford Hill

drug addiction. The ministers were taken to a recently discovered pirate radio station on the roof of a tower block, one of several such stations which make large sums from advertising rates at which drugs are sold.

Margaret Moran, chairman of the Association of District Councils, told them: "At local level, there is a great deal of co-operation between the different agencies, but that is just not echoed between government departments."

Bernard Crofton, Hackney's housing director, said that the main problem in clearing troublemakers off estates was protecting witnesses prepared to give evidence against them. "Essential witnesses are too scared to give

evidence in court," he said. "They have to live on the estate alongside people whom they are accusing and they are terrified at the prospect. Even when the case comes to court they are scared just sitting in a corridor with a gang of 30 thugs whom they are meant to identify. This is a serious problem which undermines the law and makes it very difficult to bring peace to housing estates."

Surrogacy baby agent risks jail

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

A CALIFORNIAN "rent-a-womb" pioneer offering surrogacy babies to British couples for £30,000 risks prosecution if he comes to London, the Department of Health said yesterday.

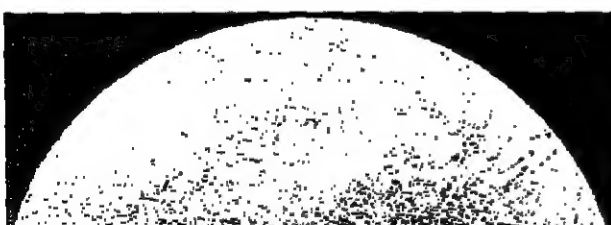
Bill Handel, who heads the largest surrogacy agency in the United States, could be jailed or fined under laws designed to prevent commercial baby farming. He plans to host a seminar at the Hilton Hotel in central London on February 1, which six couples have agreed to attend. Others can join if they inform the organisers beforehand.

Mr Handel, a talk show host, runs the Center for Surrogate Parenting in Los Angeles, which has organised 427 births. Couples choose a surrogate mother from a catalogue of 250 women selected for their intelligence and health. The father's sperm is used to impregnate the surrogate mother. Alternatively, if a woman can carry a baby but has no viable eggs, she can receive a donated egg for

£6,000. The babies are conceived and born in California out of the reach of British law. Legal contracts between parents and surrogate mothers are enforceable in the United States so the purchasers can be certain the baby will be handed over.

The Department of Health said that Mr Handel could be breaking the Surrogacy Arrangements Act 1985 and the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 if he came to Britain looking for business. Although surrogacy is legal here, there are strict rules to prevent it becoming commercialised. Surrogate mothers can be paid only their expenses.

"It is against the law to advertise or act on a commercial basis compiling information towards making a surrogacy arrangement," the Department of Health said. Mr Handel may be able to avoid these restrictions if he publicises his seminar through media articles and interviews, rather than paying for advertisements.



Europa: solar system's most promising source of life

There may be life on distant moons

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

MOONS in orbit around recently discovered planets outside the solar system could be habitable. American scientists have suggested. The giant Jupiter-sized planets are made of gas and cannot support life but, if they have rocky moons with water, the moons could be habitable, or even inhabited.

The speculation comes from three scientists at Pennsylvania State University, led by Darren Williams, an astronomer. They say that the two most likely planets orbit the stars Icy 91 B and 47 Ursae Majoris.

Planets around stars outside the solar system have long been assumed to exist, but have been detected only in the past couple of years. They cannot be seen, but their existence can be inferred by the "wobble" they impart to

the star they orbit. So far, the detection methods are sensitive enough to detect only very large planets, none of which is likely to be habitable. However, just as Jupiter's moon, Europa, is considered one of the most promising places for life within the solar system, moons around the distant giant planets might also be habitable.

The scientists point out in *Nature* that the moons may suffer from large temperature fluctuations, and would be constantly bombarded by energetic charged particles from the planets that could gradually erode their atmospheres. However, if the moons were sufficiently dense and had strong magnetic fields, it was conceivable that they could retain enough atmosphere to sustain life. The Pennsylvania team concludes.

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Labour promises faster support for struggling schools

By John O'Leary, Education Editor

LABOUR accused the Government of complacency over school standards yesterday after disclosing that the number of schools failing by inspectors had doubled in a year.

David Blunkett, the Shadow Education and Employment Secretary, claimed that ministers were neglecting a growing problem. A Labour government would adopt a new approach to prevent failure and offer a fresh start to those beyond rescue.

Official figures given in answer to a parliamentary question showed that the number of failing primary schools had increased from 46 in 1994-95 to 116 in 1995-96. The equivalent figure for secondary schools was 65, compared with 35 a year earlier.

Mr Blunkett said: "The Tories talk a lot about failing schools, yet very rarely are they prepared to act." Labour would strengthen local authority inspection and advisory services to ensure that struggling schools were identified quickly and helped to

improve. Good head teachers would be encouraged to take over weak schools near by and schools which still failed would start afresh with a new name, new staff and governors.

However, Ofsted, the school inspection agency, said there had been no rise in the proportion of failing schools. The increase in failures merely reflected the growth in the number of schools inspected.

A total of 229 schools have failed inspections. 2 per cent of all those inspected. Fifteen have since been cleared and 11 have closed, including Hackney Downs School, in east London, the only one shut on government orders.

An Ofsted spokeswoman said: "A school can only be deemed to require special measures when it has been inspected and, given that we have not been once around the system, inevitably that list is growing. While it may appear that the number is rising, there is no sign of the proportion going up."

The Department for Education and Employment insisted that its approach was paying dividends, with two thirds of schools inspected shown to be improving. A spokeswoman said: "The Government has tackled the issue of failing schools vigorously, putting in place the inspection system which identifies weaknesses. We then legislate for special measures to improve or close those schools."

The National Union of Teachers voiced fears for perhaps the best-known failing school, The Ridings, in Halifax, as a result of an inspection of Calderdale local authority's services, which takes place next week. Calderdale will be the first authority to be inspected under arrangements still before Parliament in the Education Bill.

Doug McAvoy, the NUT general secretary, said he feared the exercise could be used as an excuse to send a "hit squad" into the Ridings. "If the inspection is used in this way, it will discredit the whole idea of local authority inspections."



Artistic impression: John Bartlett with his depiction of the poll tax riot. Some observers said that it reminded them of Soviet heroic art

Riot painting creates style out of chaos

By Adrian Lee

A PAINTING that depicts poll tax rioters battling with police in Trafalgar Square is to be the centrepiece of an exhibition at the Museum of London.

John Bartlett's work shows fires blazing beneath Nelson's Column and officers in riot gear standing over a fallen protester. Yesterday the museum, where the picture will hang in the new London Now gallery, said it expected some people to be upset.

Dr Cathy Ross, a historian at the museum, said: "It is a picture of London as it is and we hope it will get visitors thinking. We like things to be striking to the point of controversy, but we have not set out to shock or stick two fingers up to the Establishment."

The 12ft by 9ft painting by the 36-year-old artist, from Stockwell, south London, is on a free loan. One theme of the gallery, which opens next Tuesday, is power; the picture will hang near the Lord Mayor's coach. The exhibition also features early editions of *The Big Issue*, the magazine for the homeless. A 3D work entitled *The Ghetto* shows squatters in conflict with developers.



The reality: rioters in Trafalgar Square in 1990. Bartlett studied photographs

shown in the picture were those of models who agreed to pose at his Bethnal Green studio. He said he studied a number of photographs of the 1990 riot and the picture was a composite of several incidents. The museum receives £4.3 million a year funding from the Government and the Corporation of London.

Harry Greenway, the Conservative MP for Ealing North, said: "It's a great pity to glorify such extreme hatred and violence when there are so many positive things on display. I was a witness to the riot as I was walking through

with my wife. It was terrifying."

Toby Jessel, Conservative MP for Twickenham, and a member of the Select Committee on National Heritage, said: "In a free society you can't ban paintings like this, but it's a bit undergraduate, isn't it? It looks like something out of Soviet Russia." He saw the painting as biased against the police, who were portrayed as dark and sinister.

Richard Morrison, Arts Editor of *The Times*, also found Soviet parallels: "It is rather quaint and old-fashioned, like those heroic paintings of Soviet tractor drivers, with bulging muscles, from the 1930s."

A spokeswoman for the Department of National Heritage said: "The decision is one for the museum. The Government does not decide which paintings should be shown."

A Metropolitan Police spokesman said the force had no objection to the work. It was similar to one depicting a clash between anarchists and police in London in 1936.

Farmer in land dispute 'ran down councillor'

A FARMER ran down a parish councillor who objected to his plans to erect new buildings on his land, a court was told yesterday.

The victim, Anthony Taylor, 56, was out jogging past the farm when he was hit by the bullbars of David Morris's Nissan Patrol. He somersaulted over the bonnet and landed in a ditch with his pelvis broken in two places.

Mr Taylor, an architect, told Worcester Crown Court that Mr Morris then turned the car around as he lay in agony. "I was concerned he was going to drive over me again. I tried to scramble down into the ditch. He stood by me and threatened, 'No one messes with me. The next time, you will be in a wheelchair.'"

He spent six weeks in hospital recovering from the incident on Christmas Eve, 1995, at Cleeve Prior, near Evesham. Mr Morris, 45, denies causing grievous bodily harm with intent and dangerous driving. He insisted that Mr Taylor lost his balance on the muddy verge and fell into the road in front of his car.

Andrew Lockhart, for the prosecution, told the jury that Mr Morris's wife, Joanne, called an ambulance, but he became scared as other villagers gathered, and left the crash scene. Police arrested him three days later, but he refused to tell them where the Nissan was. He was said to have loaned it to a friend.

Mr Lockhart said: "The men were near neighbours but there was a great deal of bad blood between them."

Ten months earlier, Mr Morris's rottweiler had killed Mr Taylor's Staffordshire bull terrier. Mr Taylor had then strode round to the farm armed with a stick, and Mr Morris took out a court injunction to stop him going on his land.

Mr Taylor, who has lived in the village for 30 years, objected to new plans for the farm, where Mr Morris had moved in 1992. He said: "As a parish councillor I have a keen interest in environmental matters. It was nothing personal." The trial continues.

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Blair could face MPs' inquiry into secret fund

By Andrew Pierce, Political Correspondent

PRESSURE is growing for Tony Blair to give evidence under oath to a public hearing of the Commons standards watchdog over the operation of his secret office fund.

The Standards and Privileges Committee, which has already prompted the resignation of one government minister, will begin an investigation into the management of the £500,000 trust within weeks. The trust is high on the committee's agenda, it was confirmed yesterday.

Mr Blair will be asked to give written evidence to the committee about the £500,000 in secret donations to fund his office expenses. Last night Labour strategists were dismayed by the development, which they fear could switch the spotlight from Tory party sleaze to Mr Blair's own backyard.

John Prescott, the deputy Labour leader, also receives substantial support for his office costs from a blind trust. Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, receives financial help from the Industrial Research Trust, a third blind fund operated by the Labour Party. The revelation about the trusts came after Mr Blair instituted a policy of publishing donations to the party of more than £5,000.

The anonymous donations to Mr Blair were deemed acceptable by Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner, to prevent any allegations of cash for favours. Sir Gordon endorsed the fund in a report last summer, after being approached by Jonathan Powell, Mr Blair's chief of staff.

Members of the Tory-

controlled committee, however, never read the report, which Sir Gordon regarded as uninformative. He has now indicated to the committee that its members could "adopt a different view" over the precise financial arrangements. He has also made clear that he would find it hard to be "impartial" in any investigation after having sanctioned the arrangements.

Tory MPs are anxious to strike back at Labour and believe that Mr Blair is vulnerable over the fund. The donors include Michael Levy, a millionaire music publisher who is a friend of the Labour leader.

The committee, chaired by Tony Newman, Leader of the Commons, will deal with the Blair blind trust after it finishes questioning Andrew Mitchell, the Social Security Minister. He will give evidence next week on allegations that he tried to influence an inquiry into the former Trade Minister Neil Hamilton's role in the cash-for-questions affair. The committee's highly critical report on similar allegations against David Willetts recently led to his resignation as Paymaster General.

One senior Tory said: "It is a distinct possibility that members on the committee will agree to call Mr Blair to ensure it appears to be even-handed."

David Shaw, Tory MP for Dover, who lodged the complaint about the trust, said: "My complaint has to do with the thoroughness and properly of the anonymity of Blair's donors has been compromised. The concept of blind donors is a sham."



Tory TV broadcast dates suggest March election

By Jill Sherman

THE Tories are to bring forward their two remaining party political broadcasts before the general election campaign, when Mr Major insisted there were no plans to raise VAT then imposed it on fuel bills. The new poster claims that Tory plans to put VAT on food will cost voters £10.50 a week.

All main parties are entitled to five political broadcasts a year, but more are allowed once the election campaign has started. The Tories' decision to hold their last broadcasts so soon means that they could have six weeks without a prime television slot before the official election campaign starts.

Labour sources said that Mr Major's repeated public insistence on May 1 concealed his intention for a snap poll. They argued that this would allow the Tories to move the writ for a by-election in South

Wiltshire in early February then, two weeks later, say that it could be subsumed by the general election.

But senior Tory party sources insisted that the aim was simply to get the momentum going in the election campaign. One said: "We will have other ideas for publicity nearer the time."

If the Tories have any hope of reversing Labour's lead in the polls, they will need to start the turnaround within the next few weeks. They have already blitzed the country with their "Labour will end in tears" posters, but recent polls suggest they have had little impact yet.

Yesterday Tony Blair warned his MPs not to be complacent. He told the Parliamentary Labour Party: "The election is not over until the last vote has been cast."

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Ex-PoWs offered hope in pay battle

By Adrian Lee

THE Armed Forces Minister gave his support yesterday to former prisoners of war who claim that the Government owes them at least £20 million for pay docked while they were held captive.

Nicholas Soames stopped short of bowing to the ex-servicemen's demands, although he said that his natural instincts were to resolve the matter. A review, begun last Summer, will be completed in March.

"We must go through this re-examination with the greatest possible care and settle this once and for all," Mr Soames said during a Commons debate. The former Second World War prisoners won all-party backing but Graham King, their spokesman, said: "We already have plenty of sympathy. We want action."

Previous inquiries have found against the veterans, who were held in Germany and Italy and returned home to find that their pay had been deducted. The Government has refused to compensate them, saying that the loss of records made it impossible.

More than 14,000 former officers and medical orderlies are affected. Under the Geneva Convention they should have received pay from the enemy. But they received nothing or worthless "laager marks". Some were even taxed on income they never received.

David Rendel, Liberal Democrat MP for Newbury, said: "It's never too late to right a wrong, but the wrong should be righted as quickly as possible."

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons: Treasury questions to the Prime Minister; Northern Ireland Arms Decommissioning Bill; remaining wages; backbenchers' debate on government policy towards North Korea.

In the Lords: Firearms (Amendment) Bill; committee debate on care and welfare of ex-servicemen and women.

Ashdown's approach is more talk than substance

THE big election issue is public spending, not Europe, constitutional reform, or education. The most intractable problem facing any government after the election will be how to finance the public's desire for improving standards of health, welfare and social security. Both the Tories and Labour pretend this can be achieved without raising personal tax rates. The Liberal Democrats say they are the only party to be honest about public services and tax. But judging by Paddy Ashdown's *Liberal Democrat* News lecture last night, their candour is more rhetorical than substantive. His solutions do not match his aspirations.

Mr Ashdown is right about the sterility of the current debate on taxes and spending and in his view that what people "want is better services — and the knowledge that

the taxes they pay are being wisely spent". Any increase in spending and taxes needs to be justified in detail. But talking about value-for-money and eliminating bureaucracy achieves nothing. Mr Ashdown points to the shortcomings of the old "command-management" and "crude market" systems, but it is unclear what his "people first" approach means in practice. He talks of making NHS trusts more accountable to local communities, and more responsive to local needs and priorities, but is vague about how this would either meet public worries or would address the underlying funding dilemma.

Mr Ashdown is torn between his head and his heart. He accepts that some services are better provided by the private or voluntary sectors with the Government acting as commissioner rather than doer. However,

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

these goals are not shared by many local Liberal Democrats who defend existing structures and resist opting out and other initiatives to expand choice and raise standards. Mr Ashdown also believes that it is "both possible and necessary, over time, to bring the share of national income spent by government down below 40 per cent". He argues that this can be achieved through economic growth and an effective welfare-to-work strategy. That, as the Treasury committee's latest report implies, is over-optimistic. But Mr Ashdown is unwilling to admit the means needed to fulfil his ends.

His specific ideas skirt the real problem. Spending an extra £2 billion a year on education, paid for, if

necessary, by an extra penny on income tax, may help to relieve immediate pressures, but it is a short-term palliative. His ideas of health spending are as gimmicky and one-off as Labour's. His proposal that the National Audit Office and the Audit Commission should examine the additional health and education spending to see that the money raises standards and improves quality would not only undermine the current value of the two bodies as independent monitors but is muddled since extra money cannot be separated from existing funding.

There is no way of avoiding choices between public and private provision. As Andrew Dilnot of the Institute for Fiscal Studies told the Treasury committee, if current tight spending plans are to be met, "we will continue to see very

substantial growth in private spending on health and education because total health, education and retirement spending has always grown as a share of national income. If public spending does not grow, private spending will". Mr Dilnot argued that this question is being dodged by the politicians though it is "the single largest issue facing government in the next ten years in this country and the rest of the Continent".

Mr Ashdown fails to address these issues adequately. His proposed "Tax Contract" is essentially a way of making taxpayer provision more politically acceptable. No taxation without explanation is a soundbite, not a policy. Mr Ashdown has identified half the problem but he has not confronted his party's attachment to traditional public services.

PETER RIDDELL

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By CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN JERUSALEM
AND BEN MACINTYRE

ISRAEL'S Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, yesterday faced a showdown with hardliners in his 18-member Cabinet as he fought to push through the deal initialled hours earlier to withdraw Israeli forces from 80 per cent of occupied Hebron in the West Bank.

Despite fierce opposition from members of his own Likud Party, Mr Netanyahu was expected to squeeze a narrow majority. As reports circulated of the fierce Cabinet debate, Israel radio predicted the Prime Minister would secure an 11-7 victory. Mr Netanyahu would be expected to secure an overwhelming majority in favour of the deal when it goes before the 120-seat Knesset later today. Only about 30 deputies, most from the Right, are expected to oppose.

The Cabinet meeting took place against a background of praise for Mr Netanyahu from many parts of the Arab world and a 1.5 per cent jump in share values on the Tel Aviv market. But a group of furious rightwingers blew whistles outside to protest. "Hebron, bad for the Jews, good for the murderers" read one slogan recalling last year's election poster claiming "Netanyahu is good for the Jews".

At the meeting Benry Begin, the Science Minister and son of the former Likud Prime Minister, Menachem Begin.

opposed Mr. Netanyahu. One Israeli official described their clash as "vociferous." Before going into the meeting, Mr. Begin, a believer in the notion of a "Greater Israel," told army radio: The Prime Minister committed himself to give away sections of the Jewish homeland. HE hits got zero from Arafat. "Another minimalist opponent was Rafael Eitan, leader of the Tsomet Bloc. "I heard nothing which changed anything," the former army chief of staff said after talking with the Prime Minister. "This is a very dangerous deal to the Jews of Hebron," we are conferring advantages on those who still seek to destroy us."

Dovish members of the opposition Labour Party welcomed Mr Netanyahu "to the Oslo Club". Yossi Beilin, one of the architects of the original peace with the Palestinians, said: "The Prime Minister understands that the Oslo process is the only game in town."

As ministers wrangled over the deal, leaving Israeli military commanders were demanding that the redeployment take place swiftly in order to thwart violent attempts by Jewish extremists to sabotage it by acts of violence. Military and police reinforcements were pumped into Hebron, where 450 Jewish settlers are surrounded by 120,000 resentful Palestinians.

Although the accord said

that a ten-day period was allowed for the pullback to be completed, most army officers predicted that it would be over by the weekend. One officer said that, once the handover to the 400 Palestinian policemen had begun, it would take only a matter of hours to complete. To minimise the risk of violence, it is expected to begin under cover of darkness.

The deal — which embraces three further Israeli pullbacks from rural areas of the West Bank — was criticised by Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement. The militant group, which has strong support in Hebron, warned Yassir Arafat's Palestinian Authority "against launching an arrest campaign against the movement ... in accordance with pledges made under the deal".

Accompanying the accord were copies of what Israeli officials claimed was an important letter from Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, obliging Mr Arafat to launch a crackdown against Hamas extremists.

Yitzhak Shamir, the former right-wing Israeli Prime Minister, described the deal as a self-inflicted calamity for the Jewish state and predicted that it would rapidly collapse with further bloodshed.

Speaking in Paris, Mr Shamir, 81, told Europe 1 radio: "This accord is very bad for Israel. It's a defeat we have inflicted on ourselves."

Leading article, page 19
Photograph, page 22



**FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN HEBRON**

A FEW hours after the accord was reached to withdraw Israeli troops from most of Hebron, the city simmered with potential violence.

On the twisting road from Jerusalem there were long tailbacks as Israeli police and soldiers stopped cars suspected of carrying Jewish extremists intent on disrupting the withdrawal. For Hebron's 450 settlers, the 400 Palestinian policemen soon to be patrolling the city are terrorists.

The embattled mood of Jews who in last May's election voted for Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, was summed up by the sign on one Israeli bus, its windows reinforced against Arab stones. "Bibi is a traitor" charged the banner placed by members of Kach, an outlawed extremist group. Israeli

**FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON**

PRESIDENT CLINTON joined a host of world leaders in hailing the Hebron agreement as a step towards lasting peace in the Middle East, but issued a warning against weakening resolve by the parties involved.

The White House portrayed the deal as a personal triumph for Mr Clinton and Warren Christopher, the outgoing Secretary of State. In many re-

REACTION

spects, however, the reluctant handshake at Erez Crossing was more a victory for America's hardball diplomacy than anything else. The announcement on Sunday by Dennis Ross, Mr Clinton's special envoy, that the United States had finally lost its patience, proved to be the final catalyst.

In Washington, Mr. Clinton praised Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, and Yassir Arafat, the President of the Palestinian Authority, but also gave glowing plaudits to the American diplomatic team.

Britain and France said the agreement paved the way for future pacts to secure peace. Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, sent messages to Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat addressing them as "dear friend". China, emphasising the principle of exchanging peace for occupied Arab territory, said it welcomed the deal.

army commanders fear Kach may attempt a new massacre among the 120,000 Hebron Arabs. Kach members frequently make pilgrimages to the grotesque shrine of Baruch Goldstein who shot dead 29 Palestinians in Hebron's mosque in 1994.

"I am very disappointed. Netanyahu wrote a book that said there should be no surrender to terrorism, and now he has signed an agreement with a terrorist group," said Noam Arnon, of the unofficial Hebron Jewish Militia.

Many Hebron Arabs remain equally convinced that more Jewish violence is inevitable. In the market area where Noam Friedman, 22, a right-wing Jewish soldier, wounded six Palestinians on New Year's Day in an abortive attempt to sabotage the talks, Palestinians mime his attack for TV crews who have taken up position in anticipation of what one described as "good bang bang."

With reports of thousands of illegal guns circulating in a warren where Arab-Jewish hatred is palpable, many merchants are convinced they will not have to wait long.



Ross: told participants that America had lost patience



Biblical city turned into battleground

HEBRON'S explosive mix of holiness and violence stretches back to biblical times (Christopher Walker writes). It is one of the four holy cities of Judaism (with Jerusalem, Tiberias and Safed) because of its links to the biblical patriarchs and King David. The city is also holy to Islam, which traces Abraham as a precursor of Muhammad.


Circa 3800 BC: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob buried in the Cave of Makhpelah, also known as the Tomb of the Patriarchs. Between 37 and 4 BC: Herod erects wall around Cave of Makhpelah.


AD 400-500: Byzantine control; church built over the Cave.

FLASHPOINT

635-1000: Arabs conquer and rule the city; Makhpeiah church turned into a mosque.
1100-1260: Crusader rule brings temporary end to Jewish presence.
1260: Mamelukes expel crusaders; Jews begin to return.
1266: Decree, enforced through to the 20th century, bars Jews from Cave.
1918: British capture Hebron; Jewish presence reverts to 700 by 1929.
1929: Arabs slaughter 67 Jews; rest of Jews evacuated to Jerusalem.
1931: first 35 Jewish families return.

- 1936: Arab uprising: British evacuate Jews.
- 1948-47: Jordanian rule.
- 1967: Israel captures the city: Jewish quarter found destroyed.
- 1968: Rabbi Moshe Levinger, a hardliner, leads Jewish families posing as Swiss tourists, founds settlement of Kiryat Arba.
- 1979: Group of Jewish women and children move into Beit Hadassah building. Allowed to stay after Palestinians kill six Jews in Hebron the next summer.
- 1994: Baruch Goldstein, a New York-born settler, murders 29 Arabs at prayer.
- March 28, 1996: Date originally planned for Israeli military redeployment.

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Crowded Athens hampers archaeologists as they uncover roots of ancient world

Discovery of Aristotle's school fuels hunt for lost landmarks

FROM JOHN CARR IN ATHENS

THE reported discovery of the 4th century BC school founded by Aristotle has whetted archaeologists' appetites for other lost landmarks of ancient Athens that must be lying beneath the modern city.

The Acropolis and the monuments on and around it are just the visible tip of a vast hidden trove of relics. "There are undoubtedly large areas where there is a lot to be found," David Blackman, Director of the British School of Archaeology, said. The main problem for scholars is that central Athens is so built up that systematic scientific exploration is all but impossible.

Most of the time it is up to workers digging the foundations for new buildings to uncover tantalising glimpses of history. This week one such team of workers, clearing the space for a museum of modern art, uncovered what was almost certainly Aristotle's Lyceum.

A stone's throw from the present British Embassy, the Lyceum was identified by traces of the extensive walling and exercising space described by classical writers.

Polyxeni Bouya, an archaeologist employed by the Greek Ministry of Culture, called the emerging wall layout "the main substantial clue, and a very persuasive one", adding: "The date of the ruins correlates absolutely."

The discovery apparently clears up years of scholarly dispute about the location of the Lyceum, founded by Aristotle about 335 BC. Archaeological maps of Athens placed it as straddling the present Botanical Gardens, next to the

parliament building across the road from the local British Airways office. "There seems to be no doubt about it: that is the Lyceum, although a bit further east than we thought it to be," Mr Blackman said.

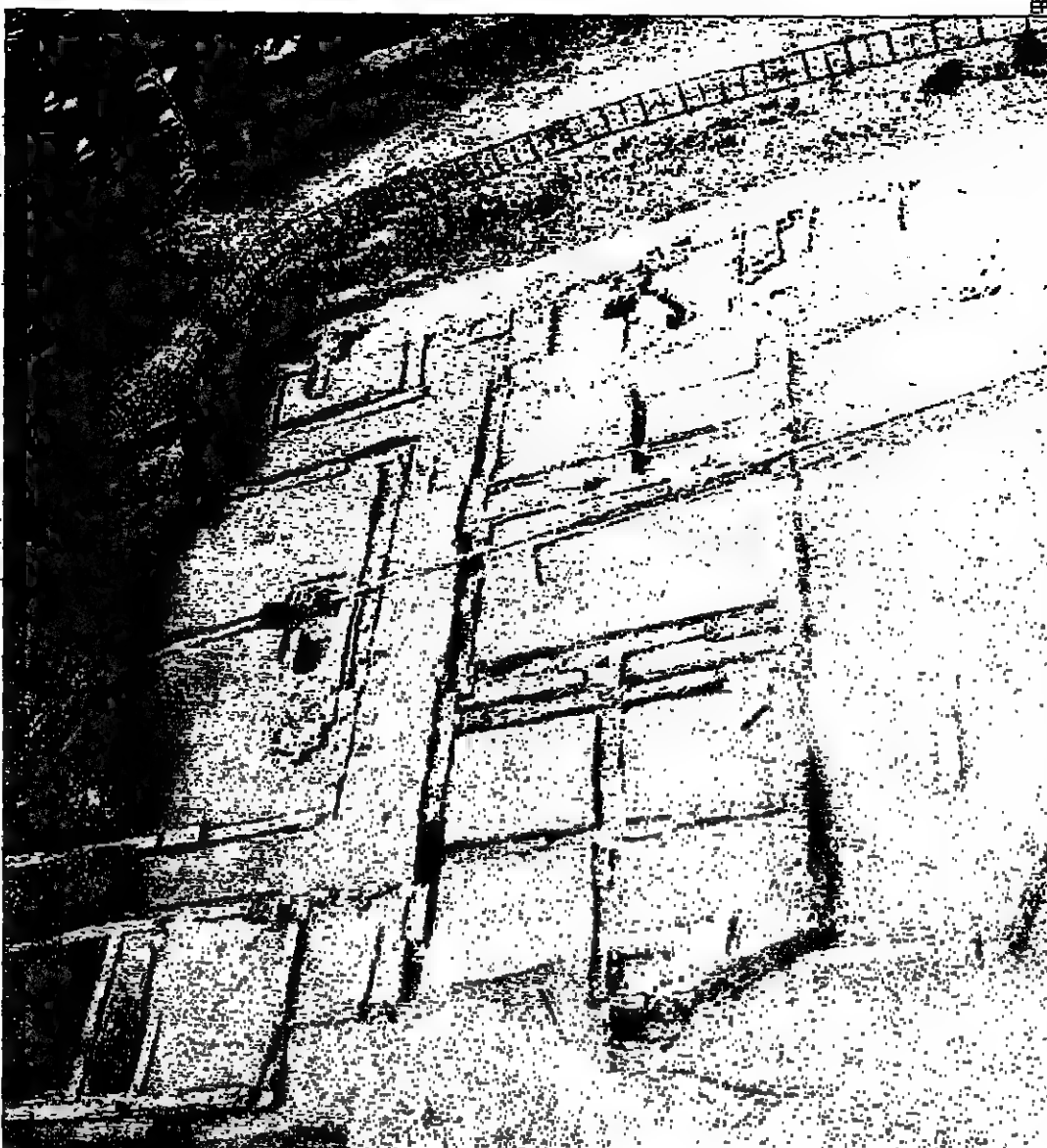
Sandwiched between the Athens Conservatory and the Officers' Club, the site would have escaped attention completely if Athens City Council had not approved a plan last year to cut down its olive and pine trees and build a museum, overriding protests by environmentalists and nearby flat dwellers.

Four years of work on the Athens metro have also brought windfalls to the archaeologists, although they are unhappy about the Government's impatience to get the metro working by 1999. The archaeological service has managed to get work halted temporarily on at least one underground station near the Acropolis on the ground that too many relics, including pottery shards and fragments of marble monuments and statues, were being discarded too hastily.

□ **Skeletons found:** The skeletons of about 100 newborn babies, found in a sewer under a 4th century AD bathhouse in Ashkelon, southern Israel, were probably killed as the unwanted offspring of prostitutes and their clients (Nigel Hawkes writes).

Lamps decorated with erotic images and the inscription "Enos Enioi" found at the site suggest that it was used as a brothel, a team of scientists say in this week's *Nature*.

Leading article, page 19



Remains, believed to be those of Aristotle's Lyceum, which have been uncovered in the centre of Athens, not far from the British Embassy. The site was found accidentally by building workers

Laying foundations of academic prowess

BY PHILIP HOWARD

ARISTOTLE'S Lyceum has turned up where the evidence pointed: outside ancient Athens, between the steep little urban Mount Lycabettus and the stream Ilissos. Or in a modern guide, between the central avenues of Rigillis and Vasilissis Sofias, behind the War Museum and 200 yards from the British Embassy.

This first university has left its name to the French *lycée*, the Italian *liceo*, and many literary, scientific and cultural institutions, cinemas and even dance halls in England. The name comes from Apollo Lycæus, the local god of the grove where Aristotle set up his college and gymnasium on the eastern outskirts. And Lycæus means either (the god) from Lycia (south-western Turkey) or "the wolf-killer". Aristotle was born at Stagira, on the northernmost fringe of civilisation. He first came to Athens at the age of 17 to study at Plato's Academy. When Plato died, Aristotle had to leave Athens in a hurry, probably because of hostility to his Macedonian connections. He was then invited by Philip of Macedonia to become the tutor of his son Alexander (the Great) — the world's greatest teacher meets its greatest conqueror.

Aristotle's opinion of his pupil's ability is unknown, but in later years the relationship was distant. In *Politics*, Aristotle writes that rule by an absolute monarch can be justified only

if the person were as far superior to existing humans in intellect and character as humans are to beasts. He pointedly fails to mention his former pupil as a candidate for monarchy. After Alexander graduated from conquering the world, Aristotle returned to Athens and set up his Lyceum.

His school later took its name of Peripatetics from the *peripatos* or colonnade in the Lyceum where masters and undergraduates walked, talked and solved the problems of the world. But when Alexander died, another outbreak of anti-Macedonian feeling forced Aristotle to pack his bags in a hurry again. He retired to his birthplace in the barbarian north, where he died of a digestive complaint. In the Lyceum, Aristotle spent most of his time in writing or holding seminars with a small group of serious students. Some of them went on to become distinguished scholars. Theophrastus who succeeded Aristotle as head of the Lyceum, made important modifications to Aristotle's modal logic and founded botany as a scientific study. Eudemus, another of his pupils at the Lyceum, helped to improve Aristotelian logic and compiled histories of arithmetic and geometry, astronomy and theology. So these pupils started the great tradition of a community of scholars, standing on the intellectual shoulders and carrying on the work of their great predecessor.



Aristotle: the thinker

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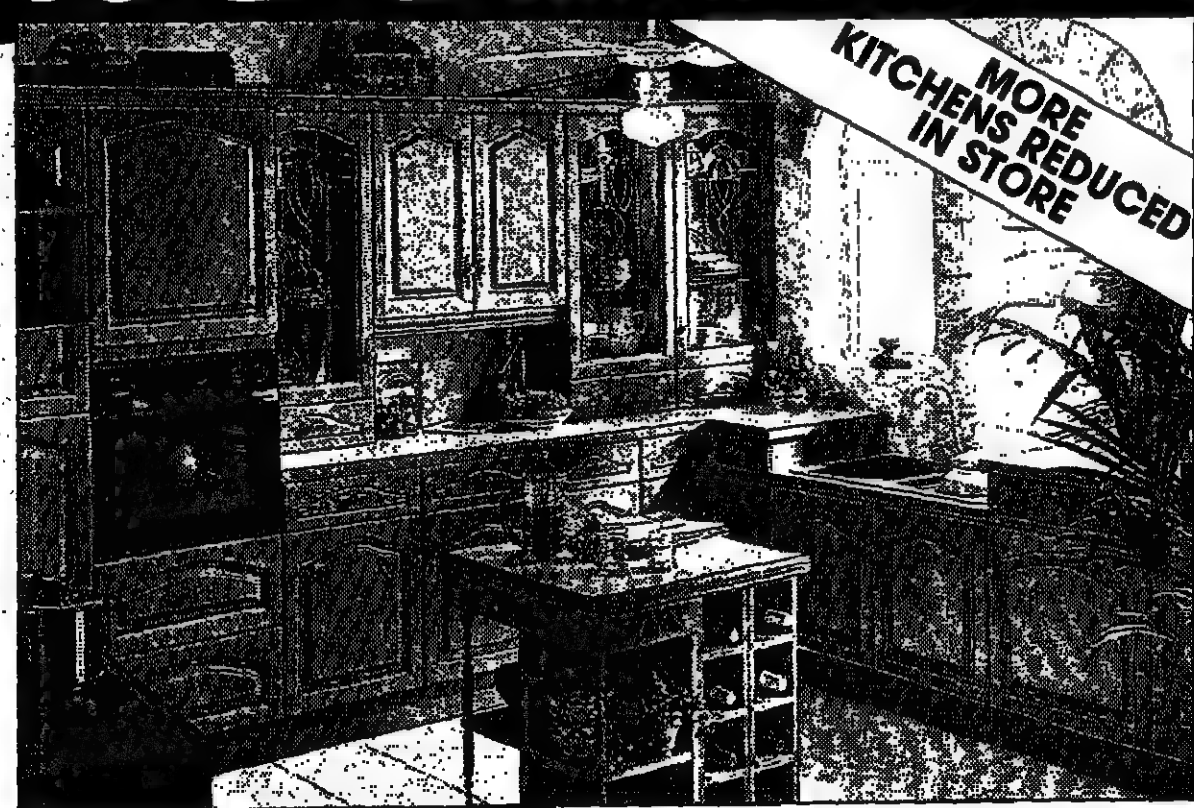
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Socialists forced into concession on Bulgarian poll

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN SOFIA

IN THE face of continuing strikes and protests over Bulgaria's desperate economic situation, the ruling Socialists yesterday agreed to elections at the end of this year instead of at the end of 1998.

Socialist MPs returned to the parliament building, which has been closed and cordoned off since it was damaged during violent clashes last weekend between demonstrators and police. But the opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) continued to boycott the parliament, and thousands of its supporters blew whistles and sounded car horns outside the building in an attempt to drown out the proceedings.

Ironically it was the rejection by the Socialists (the former Communists) of a UDF motion calling for early elections which set off last Friday's riots. Nikolai Kamov, one of the more reform-minded Socialist leaders, said the

best solution was to dissolve parliament in view of "the powerful waves of protests".

Millions of workers, including coalminers and steel workers, downed tools yesterday in a series of one-hour warning strikes. Podkrepa, the union loyal to the UDF, said the unions were building up to a nationwide strike.

Doctors and hospital staff also joined the strikes yesterday complaining that, because

Investors run riot in Tirana

Tirana: About 500 protesters demanding their money back from a failed pyramid investment scheme broke away from a demonstration and fought riot police in the Albanian capital yesterday, witnesses said. There were several arrests. (Reuters)

Bulgaria's hospitals were bankrupt, they could no longer accept patients, even for serious operations.

Some Socialist leaders are said to favour a caretaker government to negotiate a currency stabilisation package with the International Monetary Fund until elections are held. However, the newspaper *Trud* said the two other options were that Zhan Videnov, the Socialist who resigned as Prime Minister last month, might stay on for a few months or that Nikolai Dobrev, the Interior Minister, might form an interim administration.

All eyes are now on the inauguration on Sunday of Petar Stoyanov as President. Mr Stoyanov, a conservative lawyer elected last November on a wave of anti-Socialist feeling, favours elections in the summer rather than at the end of the year, and is trying to broker a compromise.



Members of the Danish Royal Family waving to a crowd at Amalienborg Castle in Copenhagen on the Silver Jubilee of Queen Margrethe yesterday. From left, Crown Prince Frederik, Princess Alexandra, Queen Margrethe, Ingrid the Queen Mother, Prince Consort Henrik and Prince Joachim

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Spain on course for clash on Gibraltar

FROM TUNGU VARADARAJAN IN MADRID

THE Madrid Government has put Spain on course for a diplomatic collision with Britain by suggesting that it could soon refuse to recognise the validity of all passports issued in Gibraltar.

British sources said yesterday that "any negative move" on Gibraltar passports could put at risk next week's Spanish visit by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary.

Reacting to the prospect of a unilateral "derecognition" of passports, the Gibraltar administration said that "relations with Spain were approaching their lowest ebb" since the Franco era. Thousands of Gibraltarians might be denied entry to Spain.

Francis Cantos, Gibraltar's spokesman, said such a move would "create havoc at the Gibraltar-Spain border" and inflict incalculable damage to basic neighbourly relations.

The plan was revealed in a recent letter to the British Embassy in which Spain's Foreign Ministry indicated it was proposing to treat as defunct a 1960 Anglo-Spanish visa waiver treaty which also covered British passport holders from Gibraltar.

The letter said that, since the freedom of movement in the European Union was guaranteed for EU citizens, such bilateral instruments "were no longer necessary".

Madrid now argues that Gibraltarians fall under a separate category of "dependent territories", without the same rights of movement as residents of Britain.

A senior Spanish Foreign Ministry official said yesterday that "the multiplicity of types of British passport" was making difficulties for Spanish border officials and that the British passport issued by Gibraltar "would have to come under fresh scrutiny".

Leading article, page 19

Yeltsin brushes off threat to his job

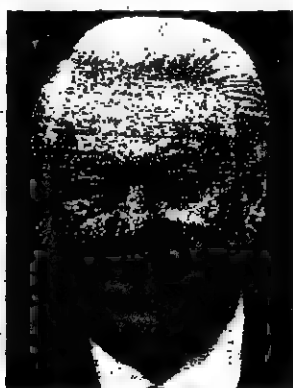
FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN, apparently unperturbed by attempts to begin impeachment proceedings on health grounds, will remain in hospital at least until the end of the week.

Sergei Mironov, chief doctor at the Kremlin, said yesterday that Mr Yeltsin's condition had stabilised since he was admitted to the Central Clinical Hospital last Wednesday for treatment of pneumonia, but he noted that the illness could involve a range of complications.

Doctors insist that Mr Yeltsin's latest ailment is unconnected with the heart trouble that kept him in hospital or in a sanatorium for much of the second half of last year.

There have been growing calls by opposition leaders for Mr Yeltsin to step down on health grounds. This week Viktor Ilyukhin, a Communist Party parliamentary deputy, announced that he was beginning impeachment proceedings in the State Duma. Last night Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party leader, said he was considering supporting the move. Mr Ilyukhin's proposal appears unlikely to get anywhere: the constitution does not provide for impeachment on health grounds.



Yeltsin: impeachment move is unlikely to work

Le Johnny rocks on in faithful France

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRANCE'S veteran rock star Johnny Halliday has been saved for the nation and will not, after all, be seeking American citizenship.

The day after M Halliday reportedly told USA Today that he wanted to become American because "French people are very rude" and "everything in America is better", the 53-year-old singer spent yesterday feverishly reassuring fans in France (where every one of the 80 million records he has sold has been bought) that he is French to the core.

M Halliday's following in France is huge, adoring and jealous, and the suggestion that he might be planning to defect has caused exceedingly bad vibrations among the faithful.

"We almost lost Johnny," declared *Le Parisien*, while another newspaper stated: "Ouf, you'll never call me Yankee Halliday." "I am French and proud of it," proclaimed M Halliday, who was born Jean-Philippe Smet and whose father was a Belgian cabaret singer. For many French people, the man known as "The French Elvis" is living, stomping proof that while France may be fighting a losing battle with America in most areas of popular culture it has colonised a small corner of rock 'n' roll.

"I have absolutely no intention of becoming American. I never said any of that," M Halliday insisted, adding that the American newspaper had misquoted him. "I know that the French people have made me... if the French are rude, then so am I."

He may have chosen an American-sounding name, he may have married an American and he may spend much of the year on a yacht in Florida, but "Le Johnny" is, he insists, a true son of France. Two weeks ago he was presented with the *Légion d'honneur*.

Scandal deepens over Hong Kong chief's forced exit

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG'S normally staid Legislative Council chamber rang with accusations of "bias" and "cover-up" yesterday as the scandal deepened over the abrupt retirement of Lawrence Leung, the colony's former Director of Immigration.

W.K. Lam, the Secretary of the Civil Service, criticised Mr Leung after last week's disclosure by Mr Leung that he had virtually been forced to retire on five hours' notice after 31 years' government service. That conflicted with previous official insistence that he asked to retire early on personal grounds.

Mr Lam agreed yesterday that he had manoeuvred Mr Leung into early retirement and apologised to the Legis-

lative Council select committee investigating the Leung affair and to the press for possibly misleading them with what he termed his previous "technical" answers.

Responding to Mr Leung's claims that he had never done anything wrong and had received favourable annual performance and integrity reports as late as May, only two months before his sudden retirement, Mr Lam disclosed details of a confidential investigation of Mr Leung in 1995 by the Independent Commission Against Corruption. Although he said there was no evidence of crime, Mr Lam accused Mr Leung of having been evasive about his property and investment interests, some of them in China, rus-

ing into tens of thousands of pounds. He also mentioned his failure over five years to repay a £150,000 government housing loan made in 1989 to buy a house in Canada. Mr Leung allegedly sold the house in 1991 without telling his superiors.

Those evasions, Mr Lam said, "caused us to lose confidence in his integrity and his ability to lead a disciplined service". That, he said in evidence, was why he told Mr Leung that he could either retire voluntarily or face compulsory retirement. Mr Lam also said that Mr Leung had "failed" the police integrity vetting.

However, Mr Lam refused to give details of the police vetting because it might reveal the identities of informants. When asked about possible M15, M16, police, or foreign reports that might pertain to allegations that Mr Leung had been involved in spying or informing for China, Mr Lam replied: "I can only speak about information I have come into contact with."

Security reports, if any, were "confidential". He said that the Immigration Service "has not been compromised". That is a matter of central importance to the Government, including the Governor, which has assured foreign governments the over the past year that Hong Kong identity documents are reliable, which means that Hong Kong citizens wishing to travel or live abroad using such documents should be welcomed.

Mr Lam said that allegations about Mr Leung's loyalty were not relevant to his integrity report on Mr Leung, agreed by the highest officials in Hong Kong, including Chris Patten, the Governor, which recommended that Mr Leung should leave the service promptly on full pension.

After the hearing, Mr Leung said that he was grateful to the Government for dismissing allegations that he was a spy, although Mr Lam had said only that such allegations did not play a part in his decision to offer Mr Leung immediate retirement.



Ice elfin has a bumpy ride

an international following at the 1994 Winter Olympics. She moved in America soon afterwards and became a professional, attracted by the prospect of earning \$2 million (£1.2 million) a year.

Her car accident has led to speculation that the good life has been too much for her. In the past few months her skating has been interrupted by problems associ-

ated with weight-gain. She has had difficulty keeping her balance, and her triple salcos are not as fluent as they once were. In short, the little acrobatic ice princess is turning into a woman, with a bosom, hips and a very American teenage "attitude". One irony of the scandalised, coast-to-coast American media coverage is that it probably makes Miss Baint a more saleable asset. Her next ice show, if she can ever learn to control those expanding hips, will surely be a sell-out.

Sudan declares jihad to thwart rebel advance

BY SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

SUDANESE rebels hoping to spark a popular uprising against Khartoum's radical Islamic Government yesterday overran garrison towns and claimed to be close to cutting off power to the capital.

In a mood bordering on panic, President al-Bashir declared a jihad (holy war) against the rebels, an alliance of southern Christians seeking autonomy and northern Arabs opposed to Sudan's extremist regime.

He also sent his Vice-President to Cairo in the hope of preventing Egypt from joining what he claimed were Eritrean and Ethiopian-backed invaders who have taken border areas north and east of Khartoum.

Strapped for manpower after 18 years of civil war with the south, General Bashir this week closed Khartoum's university and ordered all students to report to the front line. He also abandoned efforts at mediation with the rebels and said the only solution would be "found by the gun".

The offensive is the first combined operation by rebels from the north and the south since the President took power in 1989. Late last year Sadiq al-Mahdi, Sudan's former Prime Minister and the grandson of the Muslim leader who killed General Charles Gordon, fled to Eritrea where he was able to co-ordinate the rebellion with the southerners.

In Asmara, the Eritrean capital, a spokesman for the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) said the dissidents were within 50 miles of Damazin, the site of a hydroelectricity plant that provides 80 per cent of Khartoum's power.

The rebels also said that the SPLA and the mainly northern Sudan Alliance Forces captured the Government's barracks at Gadameyeb, northeast of Kassala town, and were attacking garrisons nearby. A government official confirmed that they had overrun Geissan and Kurmuk in the south of Blue Nile province and were threatening Mahaban, but insisted that the rebels were only junior partners in what amounted to an invasion by Ethiopia and Eritrea. "Scores of mujahidin are

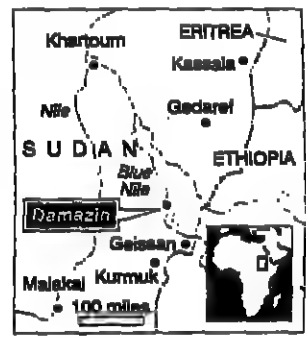
now hurrying towards the theatre of operation to defend the eastern front and teach the aggressors and the traitors a lesson they will never forget. The only thing left now was the power of the gun," he added.

The rebels said their objective was not to capture the capital but to put pressure on the Government and ignite a popular uprising. Their spokesman, Yassir Arman, said the latest rebel advance was a turning point in the war against Khartoum.

"This operation is to enable the mass movement inside Sudan to wage an uprising against the military junta there. By advancing on Damazin we are piling economic and military pressure on the junta," Mr Arman said. □ **Lusaka:** Eight Zambian opposition politicians detained on suspicion of treason last year are suing the state for malicious and wrongful prosecution, their lawyers said yesterday.

The politicians, all members of the United National Independence Party led by Kenneth Kaunda, the former President, are each demanding \$192,000 (£116,000) from the state. The claim follows their acquittal on treason charges last year.

The opposition leaders include Mr Kaunda's deputy, Inyambwe Yara, and Mubabi Lungu, his press aide. The eight were detained last June in connection with a spate of explosions allegedly carried out by a group called the "Black Mamba". The Government said the blasts were intended to deter it from passing controversial laws that banned some candidates, including Mr Kaunda, from contesting elections held last November. (Reuters)



Balloonist's plea to China for air space

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

ON THE second day of his attempt to fly a hot-air balloon around the world, Steve Fossett, the American aviator, was troubled by the contrasting problems of political turbulence and indignation.

Mr Fossett, 52, has yet to gain permission from the Chinese authorities to fly over their territory, and his Chicago-based mission: control was yesterday trying to enlist the assistance of the White House to persuade Peking to give its assent.

For the time being, Mr Fossett, a multimillionaire commodities dealer from Colorado, was noisily chewing anti-acid tablets as his *Solo Spirit* balloon floated westwards over the Atlantic at 18,000ft. His discomfort was caused by the US Army-style MRE rations ("meals ready to eat") whose texture and taste is not dissimilar to cardboard.

Dawn on day two of his trip saw the solo balloonist making good progress, passing Bermuda and floating towards northern Portugal. His planned route then veers

northwards to Denmark, Russia and eventually, all being well, to China.

Solo Spirit is the third balloon this month to be involved in a global circumnavigation attempt. One of the other, unsuccessful balloons, the *Virgin Global Challenger*, received an initially dusky reception from the Algerian authorities when it sought permission for an emergency landing in the troubled north African country. The matter was resolved only after diplomatic efforts were made by the royal court of Morocco.

Indignation and international border matters aside, Mr Fossett was said to be in buoyant spirits yesterday. On Tuesday night his craft was tailed by a light aircraft from one of the main American television networks, which conducted a satellite-assisted interview with the balloonist. As *Solo Spirit* scudded high over the waves at 69 mph, a wind-blown Mr Fossett pronounced himself to be "pretty happy-out here".

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THE SUNDAY TIMES



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In the final part of her unexpurgated diary, Anne Frank reveals a talent for satire

Life with the unbearable Mr Dussel

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1942
Mr Dussel has arrived. Everything went smoothly. Miep told him to be at a certain place in front of the post office at 11am, when a man would meet him, and he was at the appointed place at the appointed time.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1942
The first day Mr Dussel was here, he asked me all sorts of questions — for example, how we've arranged to use the bathroom and when we're allowed to go to the lavatory. You may laugh, but these things aren't so easy in a hiding place. I was surprised to see how slow he is to catch on. He asks everything twice and still can't remember what you've told him. Maybe he's just confused by the sudden change and he'll get over it.

Mr Dussel has told us much about the outside world we've missed for so long. He had sad news. Countless friends and acquaintances have been taken off to a dreadful fate. Night after night, green and grey military vehicles cruise the streets. The men knock on every door, asking whether any Jews live there. If so, the whole family is taken away.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1942
Mr Dussel has turned out to be an old-fashioned disciplinarian and preacher of unbearably long sermons on manners. Since I have the



Alfred Dussel, left, was "an old-fashioned disciplinarian and preacher of unbearably long sermons on manners" according to Anne Frank. Anne, above, at her school desk, displays her love for writing



singular pleasure (!) of sharing my far-too-narrow room with His Excellency, and since I'm generally considered to be the worst behaved of the three young people, it's all I can do to avoid having the same old scoldings and admonitions re-

peatedly flung at my head and to pretend not to hear. Really, it's not easy being the badly brought-up centre of attention of a family of nit-pickers.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1942

Dussel has opened his dental practice. Mrs van D., the first victim, sat down on a chair in the middle of the room. Dussel, unpacking his case with an air of importance, asked for some eau de Cologne, which could be used as a disinfectant, and

Vaseline, which would have to do for wax. He looked in Mrs van D.'s mouth and found two teeth that made her wince with pain and utter incoherent cries every time he touched them. After a lengthy examination, Dussel began to scrape out a cavity. But Mrs van D. had no intention of letting him. She flailed her arms and legs until Dussel finally let go of his probe and ... it remained stuck in Mrs van D.'s tooth. That really did it! Mrs van D. lashed out wildly in all directions, cried (as much as you can with an instrument like that in your mouth), tried to remove it but only managed to push it in even farther. Mr Dussel calmly observed the scene, his hands on his hips, while the rest of the audience roared with laughter. One thing is certain: it'll be a while before Mrs van D. makes another dental appointment!

FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 1943
Dussel is terribly lax when it comes to obeying the rules of the house. Not only does he write letters to his Charlotte, he's also carrying on a chatty correspondence with various other people. Father has forbidden him to keep up the practice but I think it won't be long before he starts up again.

SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1943
Yesterday was Dussel's birthday. At first he acted as if he didn't want to celebrate it, but when Miep arrived with a large shopping bag overflowing with gifts, he was as excited as a little child. His darling "Lotje" has sent him eggs, butter, biscuits, lemonade, bread, cognac, spice cake, flowers, oranges, chocolate, books and writing paper. He piled his presents on a table and displayed them for no fewer than three days, the ridiculous old fool! You mustn't get the idea that he's starving. We found bread, cheese, jam and eggs in his cupboard.

It's absolutely disgraceful that Dussel, whom we've treated with such kindness and whom we took in to save from destruction, should stuff himself behind our backs and not give us anything. After all, we've shared all we had with him!

Dussel is slipping lower and lower in my estimation, and he's already below zero. Whatever he says about politics, history, geography or anything else is so ridiculous that I hardly dare repeat it. Hitler will fade from history; the harbour in Rotterdam is bigger than the one in Haaburg; the English are idiots for not taking the opportunity to bomb Italy to smithereens etc. etc.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 1943
Yesterday was my unlucky

day. I pricked my right thumb with the blunt end of a big needle. As a result, Margot had to peel potatoes for me (take the good with the bad), and writing was awkward. Then I bumped into the cupboard door so hard it nearly knocked me over, and was scolded for making such a racket. They wouldn't let me run water to bathe my forehead, so now I'm walking around with a giant lump over my right eye. To make matters worse, the little toe on

On Saturday there was a big drama, the like of which has never been seen here before. Dussel complained to Mother that he was being treated like a leper, that no one was friendly to him and that, after all, he hadn't done anything to deserve it. This was followed by a lot of sweet talk, which luckily Mother didn't fall for this time. She told him we were disappointed in him and that on more than one occasion he'd been a source of great annoyance.

than once by trying to pass on the news he's just heard, since the message invariably gets garbled in transmission. Furthermore, he answers every reproach or accusation with a load of fine promises which he never manages to keep.

Dussel now sits on the "bog" to borrow the expression, every day at 12.30 on the dot. This afternoon I boldly took a piece of paper and wrote: "Mr Dussel's Toilet Timetable. Mornings from 7.15 to 7.30 am. Afternoons after 1pm. Otherwise, only as needed!" I tacked this to the green lavatory door while he was still inside. I might have added "Transgressors will be subject to confinement" because our lavatory can't be locked from both the inside and the outside.

Mr van Daan's latest job. After a Bible lesson from Adam and Eve, a 13-year-old boy asked his father: "Tell me, Father, how did I get born?"

"Well," the father replied, "the stork plucked you out of the ocean, set you down in Mother's bed and bit her in the leg, hard. It bled so much that she had to stay in bed for a week. Not fully satisfied the boy went to his mother. 'Tell me, Mother,' he asked, 'how did you get born?' and how did I get born?"

His mother told him the very same story. Finally, hoping to hear the fine points, he went to his grandfather.

"Tell me, Grandfather," he said, "how did you get born and how did your daughter get born?" And for the third time he was told exactly the same story. That night he wrote in his diary: "After careful inquiry, I must conclude that there has been no sexual intercourse in our family for the last three generations!"

● Taken from *The Diary of a Young Girl: The Definitive Edition*, edited by Otto H. Frank and Mirjam Pressler, to be published by Viking on February 6, price £16.95. The Anne Frank Fonds, Basel, Switzerland 1991. English translation by Susan Massotty. Double day 1995. The book may be ordered from The Times Bookshop for the special price of £14.95 (savings on the publisher's price of £16) by calling 0900 134 459.

● The award-winning film, *Anne Frank Remembered* (VCI) will be released on video on February 3, price £12.99.



Miep Gies and Bep Voskuijl, who helped the Frank family

my right foot got stuck in the vacuum cleaner. It bled and hurt, but my other ailments were already causing me so much trouble that I let this one slide, which was stupid of me, because now I'm walking around with an infected toe. What with the ointments, the gauze and the tape, I can't get my heavenly new shoe on any foot.

Dussel has put us in danger for the umpteenth time. He actually had Miep bring him a book, an anti-Mussolini tirade, which has been banned. On the way here she was knocked down by an SS motorcycle. She lost her head and shouted "You brutes!" I don't dare think what would have happened if she'd been taken to headquarters.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1943

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1943
Dussel is in turmoil. Yesterday was November 16, the first anniversary of his living in the annex. Mother received a plant in honour of the occasion, but Mrs van Daan, who had alluded to the date for weeks, received nothing. Instead of making use of the opportunity to thank us — for the first time — for unselfishly taking him in, he didn't utter a word. And on the morning of the 16th, when I asked him whether I should offer him my congratulations or my condolences, he replied that either would do.

I can say without exaggeration that Dussel has definitely got a screw loose. We often laugh to ourselves because he has no memory, no fixed opinions and no common sense. He's amused us more

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Dr Thomas Stuttford on changing attitudes in the workplace, the symptoms and effects of too much stress and how to avoid it, plus balancing the demands of a career with a successful home life

Stress and the new wage slaves

Speeches at retirement parties 30 years ago had a fixed formula. The retiring man — it was usually a man — explained how he had joined the firm at the age of 14 or after university. He told a few anecdotes, reminisced about the friendships he had made over 40 years, and ended by saying that if he had his life again he would have done exactly the same job, and never regretted joining the firm of his choice, which had looked after him so well.

The workforce until the 1980s had pride in their skills, loyalty to their firm, which was reciprocated, and they enjoyed going to work. The comforting sense that by being part of an organisation all would be well, but that if there was any trouble the management's first consideration would be their welfare, has now gone. In the past, it was equally reassuring to the worker's doctor to know that a telephone call to the personnel manager would settle most problems when the care of the patient's, or his family's health, was dependent on the co-operation of the employer.

Personnel work is now known as the management of human resources, a term which relegates people to the level of just another resource, of little more importance than the cardboard ordered for packaging. Customers first, staff second and profit third is a discipline that no longer applies; the objective now is to satisfy the shareholders and the standard of service to the customers is secondary to its likely effect on profit.

The feeling that workers have that their skills are no longer respected, and may not be in any case needed for much longer, has had the effect of producing stress at every level of an organisation. In the past there was stress for the high fliers who were battling it out for the top jobs, but others could expect, provided they continued to do a competent job, to remain where they were until they retired. There is a table to be found in most

textbooks of occupational health, which evaluates the intensity of the stress engendered by 43 common life events. Being fired ranks only three places below the death of a spouse, divorce, being sent to jail, or the death of a close member of the family. No one working in the present climate can be certain that they will have any work to go to next month or next year. People are aware that decisions, which may lead to their dismissal, will probably be taken hundreds of miles away by a management they have never met.

Once they are over 45 to 50 the chances of a redundant worker finding as good a post as remote, and they will have to reconcile themselves to longer hours, and a falling standard of living as they grow older. The insecurity in the job market has produced a level of stress at work such as hasn't been witnessed for 70 years.

Employees have responded by working longer and longer days. Office workers are the

new 20th-century wage slaves and work hours that produced riotous strikes in the dark satanic mill towns 50 years ago. The length of the working day has a potential to ruin health, as well as social and marital life. That their wage is very high doesn't reduce stress. One City worker, twitzy and with enough of the signs of stress to fill a textbook, told me that he had had a seven-figure bonus. The bonus thrilled the financier because it meant he could retire at 45 rather than at 50. The man had no loyalty to his firm, nor it to him, and he had no enthusiasm for his work, which he only thought of as a means by which he might be able to enjoy a leisurely retirement.

His plans failed to take account of one factor: working 16 hours a day, bent over a computer, and making, or losing, money provides little satisfaction but maximum stress. My City friend may never live to relish the retirement for which he is sacrificing his health and endangering his family life.

Heart pain is not always in the chest

HIGH blood pressure, coronary heart disease, strokes and other manifestations of cardiovascular disease are consequences of a life of stress and are problems which busy people worry about at three o'clock in the morning.

The cardiovascular symptoms of stress range from a pounding heart when the worker is worried through to simple irregularities such as extrasystoles, which are occasional extra-powerful beats followed by a compensatory pause, to serious arrhythmias when the heart rate and rhythm is grossly disorganised, and occasionally may precede sudden death.

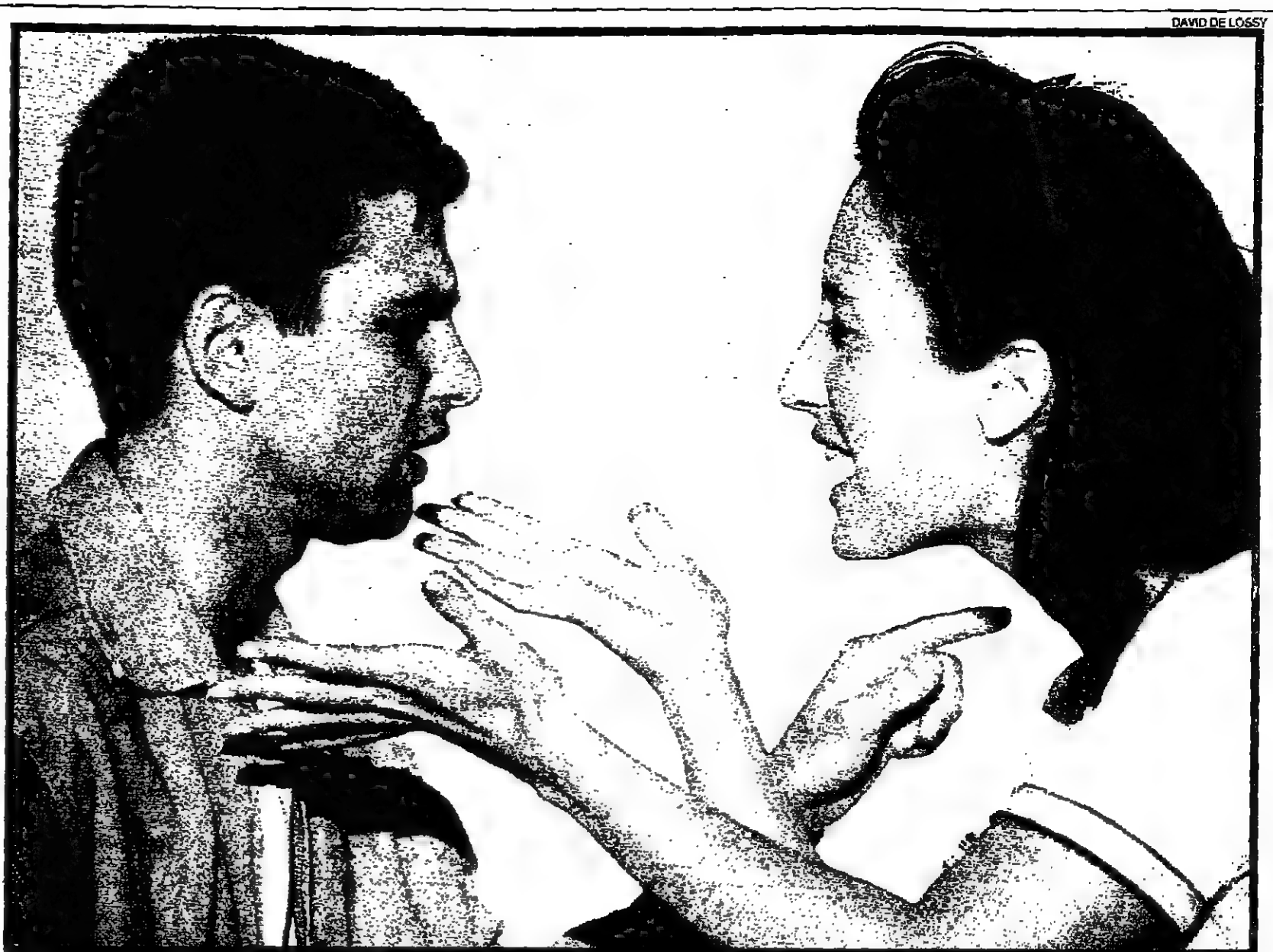
One reassuring thought is that most chest pain, even in the stressed patient, doesn't come from the heart, even though it always needs careful investigation. In particular, people have to be aware that heart pain isn't always felt in the chest but may be experienced in the neck, down the arms, just below the shoulders, in the thumb and, rather surprisingly, in the face, particularly around the teeth or tip of the nose. Unexplained indigestion should also excite interest.

Chest pain can also be caused when



Helping hand: stress causes sickness

tension in the muscles of the back causes the spine to be held so rigidly that any vulnerable nerve roots supplying the chest wall are irritated. Hyperventilation, overbreathing when tense, is associated with chest pain together with tingling in the fingers. Type A people, those who are competitive, aggressive, obsessively ambitious and intolerant, are particularly associated with heart disease. Their character may be difficult to change, although beta-blockers can help, but they would be well advised to eliminate the risk factors which can be dealt with.



By the time success has been achieved by many high-flyers, it is too late to redress the balance: the discord induced by giving priority to work will have taken its toll

ONE of the most difficult aspects of modern life is trying to balance the demands of work with a successful home life. When talking to older patients, many say that if they had their time again they would have paid more regard to their family, and less to their work. By the time success has been achieved it is too late to redress the balance: by then the discord induced by giving priority to work will have taken

Which comes first — work or family?

its toll. Business success is about the management of time. Likewise stress at home can be reduced if a clear division is made between time when the family has priority, and that when the job has.

In the mornings before going to the office, the worker ideally should have their mind free of all domestic duties.

They will then be mentally planning their day, thinking of the interviews and tasks ahead. Taking children to school, remembering the groceries or the outstanding tax bills, and thinking of the other household tasks cuts across thoughts of work. However, on returning home busy executives should have

20 minutes to themselves to unwind and thereafter the evening must belong to the family, and work must be forgotten. Weekends and holidays, too, are the family's and should be sacrosanct. Children are easily neglected but when it is impossible to attend school or other functions, regrets must be expressed to the child. It should never be assumed that children understand the pressures of the adult world.

Telltale signs of distress

A SURVEY conducted a few years ago showed that more than 65 per cent of people who reach the top worked overtime, nearly 50 per cent do office work at weekends — and weekend work doesn't include background reading.

Despite the hours they work, only 12 per cent of chief executives who were interviewed said that they had ever considered how the stress in their lives might be eased, and few took any interest in their long-term health.

Some stress and competition is needed to extend the abilities and performance of a worker. Without a challenge, anyone is likely to lapse into miserable inertia, but too much of a challenge and they will start to develop physical and mental symptoms.

The signs and symptoms of stress are well known — irritability, a witchy edginess, sleeplessness, loss of libido, impotence, sweating palms, hyperventilation and a thundering heart.

Often it is the spouse who first complains to the doctor of stress in the household. Not unnaturally, people expect their partners to be relaxed, chatty, sexually exciting, and therefore notice once a sometime jolly companion has become reserved, sweaty, grumpy, silent and generally lacklustre.

One of the most revealing questions is to ask someone who could be overstressed about their experiences when driving. The question should be so designed that it doesn't cause offence but does reveal the number of near-accidents they have had recently and

whether the number is increasing. If it is going up it doesn't necessarily mean that the patient would have been the prime cause of the accident, but it does imply that they are agitated and that their mind was on other things.

It is not only the intellect and the heart that is affected by stress; the gut, too, can reflect the tension someone is under.

Although there is a proven association between peptic ulceration and infection with helicobacter pylori, there is also no doubt that someone who, for whatever reason, has indigestion will find that it is much worse when they are overwrought.

The lower gut is also a good barometer of peace of mind. The irritable bowel syndrome of abdominal pain, either constipation or diarrhoea, and excess wind and bloating is a frequent symptom of stress, and is made worse when the patient is under pressure.

Even without developing the full syndrome, gut problems in those who are harried are common and may be manifested by no more than an over-sensitive gastro-cholic reflex with intestinal hurry, the technical way of describing the quick dash to the lavatory which the over-stressed find is necessary after they have eaten any food or had a cup of strong black coffee.

People with a sensitive gut also have a tendency to need to visit the loo several times early in the day, before the gut settles as the morning wears on.



Paper chase: too much of a challenge causes irritability

Checklist for a healthy lifestyle

A FEW simple measures will improve the general physique of the overworked, overtired person torn between work and a happy family life. Not all the recommendations can be fulfilled, but the more that are, the better the lifestyle and the longer the life expectancy.

People in busy jobs should aim for six to eight hours' sleep a night, and allow time when getting up to have breakfast. Breakfast should include a polysaturated, such as porridge, and some protein. Arrange to arrive at the office early and, untrammelled by any domestic worries, sort out the day's programme before the first appointment. Nothing is more stress-making than having to start a day's work behind schedule.

A light lunch, with little or no alcohol if there has to be a return to work, should be taken at midday, if possible leave work so as to be back home in time to see the children before they go to bed, but have some time alone before meeting the family. Keep weight down and in particular avoid too much fat. Dieting, however important, must never become a fetish. Remember the slogan HALT — hungry, angry, lonely and tired — these are the occasions when there is a temptation to drink too much. Take, if the joints allow it, 20 to 30 minutes brisk, but not violent, exercise daily, don't smoke cigarettes and don't have more than four cups of coffee a day.

Tomorrow

How to survive in the graduate jobs market. Education, PAGES 36, 37

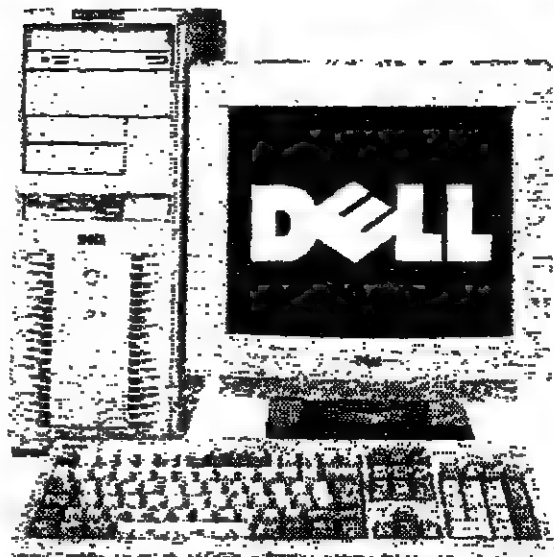
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A Bill that subverts the rule of law

Our homes should still be our castles, says Robert Alexander

We claim proudly as a country to cherish our freedoms, so much so that it is said that we have no need of a written constitution. But we are in truth alert enough to guard our liberties? One proposal in the Police Bill suggests that we are not. For no freedom can be more fundamental than that summed up in the phrase "an Englishman's home is his castle". For centuries this has been deeply rooted in our law. So much so that even in the autocratic, pre-democratic days of George III, the courts held that the executive had no power to authorise entry on private property. Only an independent judge could authorise a search warrant.

This rock of our constitution is being swept aside in the Police Bill. The House of Lords has so far been feeble in its protest. But for the concern of Lord Browne-Wilkinson, one of our most senior law lords, the change might well have gone through practically on the nod. He has done the notable service of alerting us all to its dangers. The Liberal Democrats have taken up the cudgels, but the Labour Party, once again hiding behind the Government's skirts on law and order issues, supports the change.

What are the dangers of Section 91 of the Police Bill? The powers it confers are very wide indeed. It entitles the police to "bug and burglar" private property. They would be able to introduce electronic surveillance and to seize documents. Nor are these powers concerned only with those suspected of crime. They extend to innocent third parties: to investigative journalists or priests or in defiance of legal professional privilege, to lawyers. Such actions may be taken on the broad and subjective ground that they are "likely to be of substantial value in the prevention or detection of serious crime".

These powers are clearly well intentioned. They are potentially vital in the fight against serious crime, such as fraud, money-laundering or drug-dealing. To catch the master criminal is notoriously difficult. But the more sweeping powers, the more care and supervision they require. The need for efficient policing has to be balanced against respect for individual liberties. No such protection is provided. For the judges are given no part to play. Instead the senior officer of the police force seeking to take advantage of these powers is to decide whether to authorise their use. The police are to be judge in their own cause: an impossible task, even for the most conscientious senior officers.

Why are the judges to be excluded? Because, it is said, it is wrong to involve them in law enforcement activities. This is nonsense. Judges have long been involved in determining whether ordinary search warrants should be issued. They decide whether informers should be granted immunity. They decide on the admissibility of evidence. In other countries across the world, it is the

judges, and only the judges who authorise activity of this kind. It is a fundamental principle of both the common and civil law as demonstrated in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the other countries of Europe. Indeed, to deny judicial involvement is likely to be held to be yet one more breach by this country of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The police operate under high pressure. Inevitably, in deciding whether to grant authorisation, a police officer will focus on the needs of efficient policing. Only someone independent can balance these needs against individual liberties. As the United States Supreme Court has put it, the primary reason for the judicial warrant is "to interpose a 'neutral and detached magistrate' between the citizen and the officer engaged in the often competitive enterprise of ferreting out crime".

The Government mounts two other arguments which can be given short shrift. It says that police officers will exercise their powers to invade liberties of third parties sparingly. But liberties are founded on law, not on the grace and favour of the police. They are the example of the manner of the modern White House. I was having dinner in a downtown restaurant in a group that included Chris Ruddy, the American investigative reporter who has raised most of the unanswered questions about the death of Vincent Foster, which is still under official investigation. 3½ years after Foster died. At a neighbouring table was young George Stephanopoulos, then still working for the President. Chris Ruddy walked across and introduced himself. "You're the fellow from Pittsburgh," was the courteous reply.

Over the years I have reported some of the alleged Clinton scandals. So far none of those I have reported has been disproved. I am a joint editor of the Washington investment newsletter *Strategic Investment*, which has followed the story and which commissioned the examination by three handwriting experts which found that the Foster "suicide" note was a clumsy forgery. The British reporter who has done the most thorough investigative work is Ambrose Evans-Pritchard of *The Sunday Telegraph*. He has been attacked more harshly than the rest of us; where I have been able to assess it, I have found his work professional, accurate and thorough. He has also shown great courage.

Last autumn the White House sent a number of friendly journalists a 331-page report on the press coverage of the scandal. I find myself, flatteringly, on the enemy list of the Clinton White House. I remember, after Watergate, how anxious Washington journalists were to show that the Nixon White House had put them on a similar enemies' list. Even my old colleague Henry Brandon was secretly rather flattered that the White House had bugged his phone, though he felt his old friend Henry Kissinger had been a trifle disloyal in agreeing to it.

The new White House document argues that stories originate with right-wing sources in America, are picked up by the British press and then get back into the American mainstream press. They call this the "blowback" process. The accuracy of their analysis can be judged from one of their comments on a column I wrote 2½ years ago.

More British tabloids: William Rees of *The Times* of London repeated the



"NETANYA WHO?"

Paul Brooke

On Clinton's enemy list

The White House thinks me a 'scumbag', but the President hasn't cleared himself

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More British tabloids: William Rees of *The Times* of London repeated the

Economist's charges and stated, "Dan Lasater was a major contributor to Clinton election funds. Lasater, Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, Roger Clinton, Vincent Foster and Patsy Thomason were all in the same Little Rock network, and undoubtedly worked together to advance their interests... Patsy Thomason still works at the White House, the link between Lasater and Clinton remains in place."

Apart from the belief that *The Times* is a "British tabloid" there is something odd about this reference. None of the statements I made in May 1994 was questioned then, or

column written by Mike Royko, in which I am attacked as "Rupert Murdoch's scumbag connection". Mike Royko's polemic style can be illustrated from this passage: "So it is always jarring to look at the British press and find that their journalists seem to be a bunch of scumbags. It wasn't very suave of me to put it this way, but I can't resist calling a scumbag a scumbag. Even if he takes high tea and has a hyphenated name."

I assume that Mike Royko thinks that high tea is a particularly grand English meal. Perhaps he supposes that I drop in to take high tea with the Queen in Buckingham Palace on the strength of my hyphenated name. Yet I should not complain. If he does not know what high tea is, I do not really

know what a "scumbag" is; it sounds unpleasantly clinical. I noted that Annabel Heseltine hesitated to apply it even to Max Clifford, so it must be pretty bad.

Again the strange thing about Mike Royko's column is that he did not deny any of the statements I had made, he simply objected to my making them. Indeed he took a lordly "What's new?" attitude to Arkansas drugs and corruption. "As for Arkansas being corrupt — you can say the same about New York, Texas, Illinois and most other big American states. Arkansas drug biggest? They'd be swallowed up on Chicago's West Side, LA's Watts or New York's Bronx."

Why should the White House want to put out a defence which admits by implication that Arkansas is corrupt, but argues that the big cities in the big states are even more corrupt? Such a defence merely confirms what I wrote.

Like most observers, I have found it hard to keep track of the whole network of scandals alleged against President Clinton and his associates. So far, none of them has been finally eliminated from inquiries. From the period when Clinton was Governor

of Arkansas, they include: Mesa airport and massive cocaine imports; frequent sex assignments arranged by state troopers, the Whitewater and Castle Grande property speculations and Savings and Loans; Hillary's questionable commodity profit; the Arkansas Development Finance Agency, sweetheart loans and political donations; Lasater's cocaine offence and money laundering; the environmental damage of Don Tyson's "lakes of chicken shir".

Since he became President, they have also included Foster's death and the botched investigation; the unsolved murder of Jerry Parks; the Travelgate affair; the thousand FBI files on Republicans; the Asian campaign funds.

At present the civil case brought by Paula Jones, which is now before the Supreme Court, may be the most embarrassing problem for the President, but it is not one of the more important allegations of public wrongdoing. In most of the other cases, there are issues of obstruction of justice, corruption, criminal association, unlawful campaign funds, which go to the heart of the President's public responsibility. That he has been a compulsive womaniser is a secondary matter, though it is established by a crowd of witnesses. If one simply returns to the public record and looks at the list of Clinton associates who have already been convicted, or are under current investigation, it becomes clear how wide the network has been. To date, nine Clinton associates have been convicted of felonies; five have been convicted of misdemeanours; three have died in questionable circumstances, one of them while under investigation; 19 are under investigation by special prosecutors; one has been an unindicted co-conspirator. All of these associates worked with Bill Clinton in Arkansas, the White House or both.

The Special Prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, has now to decide what further indictments to bring. I believe him to be a man of integrity. My American co-editor of *Strategic Investment*, James Davidson, believes that he has failed to follow up obvious leads and has moved far too slowly. My expectation is that Bill Clinton will probably survive his second term, but under more or less continuous investigations. Whatever Kenneth Starr decides, Bill Clinton will be a much weakened President.

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Diana's smart weapon

Magnus Linklater on the lady and the landmines

The phrase "loose cannon", which the junior defence minister Earl Howe cannot remember using to describe Diana, Princess of Wales and her call for a ban on landmines, is an unhappy one. Like landmines, loose cannons caused unpredictable damage. The Princess's remarks, by contrast, were precisely targeted. That is what made the minister so cross, and may give the Government palpitations in future.

There may be some second thoughts now about stripping Diana of her royal title. Neither Buckingham Palace nor Downing Street may have fully appreciated that when she lost her status as Royal Highness she gained a freedom to speak out on issues that were previously forbidden territory. She now has a licence to provoke, and she gives every sign of being willing to use it. Her support for a world ban on anti-personnel landmines is embarrassing to the Government, not just because it echoes Labour's policy, but because it exposes the diplomatic balancing act that Britain, as one of the world's leading arms dealers, is trying to maintain. It is, dare I say it, a minefield.

Britain's role in manufacturing and selling this particular weapon has not been admirable, but it is by no means the worst in the world. We have not exported landmines for five years, we aim to destroy half the country's stockpile in the next few years, and we would only use them "in exceptional circumstances". Quite right too. The landmine has been called "the most ruthless of terrorists"; it kills for as little as \$3 and has killed more people than poison gas or nuclear weapons. Forty-eight countries make them, with China and Russia the major sources, and Third World countries the largest market; Russia has no agreement to restrict them, and China's only concession so far has been to make its mines "detectable", so that they can be more easily dismantled. There are thought to be more than 100 million littered around the world, with as many more in stockpiles.

Progress towards a ban has been painfully slow. After endless debate, 38 countries, including Britain, agreed to add a protocol to the 1980 Convention on "certain conventional weapons", which seeks to make a distinction between legitimate military weapons and those that cause "superfluous injury... in excess of what is needed for military purposes". But it was a feeble affair, it regulates rather than prohibits landmines by stipulating that only weapons which self-destruct after 30 days may be manufactured and sold. The trouble is that these new "improved" landmines cost \$5, and since most customers are from poor countries, they are likely to opt for the cheaper version. What is more, the protocol could take at least ten years to come into effect. Since an estimated 24,000 people are killed by landmines every year, that means 240,000 more people could be killed before the new version is introduced.

So when Diana spoke out, her message carried all the fire-power of simple logic: ban these weapons and save a quarter of a million lives. Coming from Britain's second most celebrated lady, this guaranteed not only headlines, but support. Who can possibly argue against it? Like the call for a ban on handguns after Dunblane, the campaign against landmines sounds irrefragable, which is why Downing Street mounted a soothing operation yesterday to make clear that it too supports "progress towards" a worldwide ban.

That progress, however, will now have to be speeded up. Foreign ministers from 50 countries have been invited to Ottawa in October to see if they can draw up a treaty to cut through the unwieldy 1980 convention and ban landmines forever. With the Princess's words echoing in their ears, and a few well placed placards showing her alongside Angola's injured victims, who can doubt that the atmosphere will be transformed?

And this may only be the thin end of a large wedge. The International Red Cross is looking at other weapons which cause "gratuitous" damage to human beings, including some that may not have progressed beyond the drawing-board. Recently, it mounted a successful campaign to ban laser weapons that cause blindness. Now it is looking at cluster-bombs, which cause appalling injuries and which can have the same effect as landmines if they lie unexploded on the ground. There are electromagnetic and acoustic weapons which destroy human organs, and fuel-air explosives worse than Napalm. No one can say for certain what the next generation of "unacceptable" weapons will consist of — only that they will be worse.

If Diana is lured further into this area, she could find herself taking on not just the odd junior minister, but the full weight of Britain's arms industry. Whether this is a suitable battle for a Princess whose experience has so far consisted largely of comforting AIDS victims and visiting terminally ill patients in hospital is questionable. But no one should doubt that if she wants to take it on, she could mount a powerful and effective campaign.

Money talks

FROM the moment that Kermit the Frog stood up to address the Oxford Union in 1994, it became clear that a debate at the university is no longer the game of intellectual oneupmanship it once was. Star guest of the current term-card is Mandy Allwood.

Allwood provoked a welter of criticism when she refused selective abortion and sold the story of her multiple pregnancy to the *News of the World* through Max Clifford. It was Clifford who presented O.J. Simpson at the Union last summer; he has also arranged Allwood's appearance in February. The Oxford Union President, Rob Harrington, says that Allwood will support the motion "This House believes that British abortion law is too liberal". Pro-choice students are already planning their strategy for the debate and an attempt to flood the chamber with their supporters.

Allwood was out of contact yesterday, but Clifford says that he will himself be speaking at the debate — in favour of abortion. It is unclear whether this means that he will be speaking against his former client, who has informed close

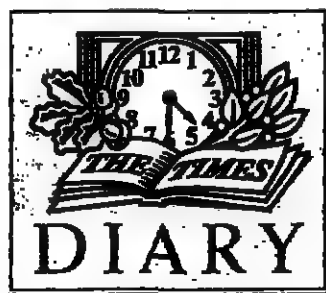
friends that she has made more than £600,000 from her failed pregnancy.

Pax Brit

SECURITY is under review at the British Embassy in Rome, after Giles Paxman, senior diplomat and brother of the broadcaster Jer-



emy, smashed his way out of the building, Schwarzenegger-style. As Economic Attaché, he prides himself on his Stalinovite capacity for work. Staying late one night, he found himself locked in the office. Rather than phone security for help, he grabbed a fire-extinguisher and headed manfully for the main door.



"I battered my way out," he says. "I had to break the door down. It could have happened to anyone." Paxman has since received an earwigging from London, but Tom Richardson, new Ambassador to the Quirinal Palace, has taken a sanguine view — decreeing a "crackdown on over-zealousness".

Wrong focus

ARGENTINA has been ungracious in its treatment of Hugh Grant and Liz Hurley, who visited the country the other day to promote the film *Extreme Measures*, starring Grant and produced by Hurley. When they arrived at the airport in Buenos Aires, the VIP lounge was not made available. The couple were besieged by fans, photographers and journalists, whose inquiries centred on Grant's tangle with the street-walker Divine Brown rather than on the film.

The trip was summed up by Grant's appearance on the main nightly news. He yawned at an interviewer's question, told her that her programme was "second rate" and that "journalists are morose scum — anyone would have to be so corrupt and nasty to be a journalist." The film has not been a success.

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Early Bird

WHEN Michael Heseltine sinks into his bath with a copy of *Country Life* this Friday night, as he does every week, he is in for a surprise. As part of its centenary celebrations, the magazine is featuring suggestive female nudes wearing pearls, a conceit on the traditional "girls in pearls". Accompanying the celebratory edition is a reproduction of the



Would the Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire still approve?

first *Country Life*, published in January 1897, which carried the tremendous Earl in Pearls, a sadly defunct feature, with the Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire kicking things off. From the look above that moustache, he does not seem to have been the sort to complain about being usurped by decorated, naked women.

Relief for all those who have been invited to President Clinton's



various inaugural balls next Monday night: Hillary Clinton has chosen a gown by the designer Oscar de la Renta, based in New York. The first lady had earlier been toying with the idea of wearing something from Badgley Mischka, a dressmaker whose signature is the erotically-charged semi-transparent ballgown.

P.H.S

هكذا من الأصل

Diana
Smart
weapon
Marsu...



PEACE IN THEIR TIME

The process moves forward: it should not be rushed

Six days were once enough to win a war in the Middle East. The process of building peace has proved much more demanding of time. After long delay and countless false dawns, Binyamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat have reached agreement on the redeployment of Israeli troops in Hebron and a wider three-stage withdrawal from the West Bank. Having finally dealt with the Palestinian leader, the Prime Minister forced his documents through an evidently reluctant Cabinet. It remains to be seen whether the Israeli Government can continue in its current form.

Various factions within Likud and splinter parties to the right of it have accused Mr Netanyahu of betrayal. That charge has no substance. At the Israeli election last May their candidate stood as the figure who favoured peace with security. The explicit contrast was with Shimon Peres who was accused of seeking peace at almost any price. Although it has won him few friends in the region or wider international community, Mr Netanyahu can credibly claim to have fulfilled his mandate. The pact he has initiated places far greater stress on the protection of Jewish settlers than one that re-elected Mr Peres would have accepted. In holding out, Mr Netanyahu resisted intense pressure from Arab neighbours and American negotiators.

To denounce the Prime Minister for undue moderation and a cavalier approach to Israel's interests defies belief. The only sense in which outraged Likud supporters and the assorted religious parties can make such a claim is if for them the term "peace with security" really meant "no peace". It probably did but had they expressed that view openly the Israeli electorate would have rejected them and Mr Peres would still be premier. The reality is that Mr Netanyahu has delivered the best practicable arrangement that circumstances allowed.

Both the intensity of opposition within Israel and the rejection by Hamas

demonstrate the continued fragility of the peace process. The main momentum behind the Hebron bargain was mutual fear of the alternative. Before any more ambitious targets can be set, this latest understanding must demonstrate its practical worth.

Israel must be willing to permit real self-government in the areas it is vacating. The Palestinian authorities must prove that they can preserve law and order in their newly re-occupied territory. Only then will anger and suspicion abate. All this requires time. Patience, not provocative gesture politics, is essential. Mr Arafat should eliminate references to immediate statehood from his rhetoric. Mr Netanyahu must resist the temptation of permitting a major expansion of settlements to appease his right wing.

That same sense of restraint should be exercised by outside parties. The questions that the peace process must address in the final status stage are even more complex than that of Hebron. The position of Jewish settlements and the standing of Jerusalem are at the very heart of the Middle East conflict. No Israeli Prime Minister could possibly orchestrate a compromise on these matters unless enormous confidence was achieved in previous undertakings. Similarly, both the United States and Egypt would be wise not to press Mr Netanyahu on the issue of the Golan Heights. His distrust of President Assad is well placed. The next move on that score belongs squarely to Syria. King Hussein of Jordan has displayed the sensitivity essential to brokering a broad consensus.

The process has advanced, painfully perhaps but positively. There were many who declared it dead after the election of Mr Netanyahu or the surging of violence on the West Bank four months ago. Such pessimism has not been justified. Further progress can come but cannot be commanded. All concerned need to recognise that and work with it. A protracted peace negotiation is far better than none at all.

PASSPORT PRACTICES

Britain must reject Spain's latest threats on Gibraltar

There is much that is good in the present Spanish Government of José María Aznar, and much of that goodness stems from a refreshing faith in common sense. Yet there is one area in which that Government has consistently failed to adopt an intelligent policy, falling back instead on bad habits drawn from a darker, less democratic Spanish age. That area is Gibraltar.

As our Madrid correspondent reports today, the Spanish Government has indicated that it could shortly withdraw all recognition from passports issued in Gibraltar. These documents, good for travel around the world — and, for the last 36 years, good for travel to Spain — have attracted the ire of the Spanish Foreign Ministry, which believes that they should not exist at all. If Spain proceeds with the decision at which it has hinted, thousands of Gibraltarians could find themselves "shut in" on land, unable to travel across the border to the Spanish mainland. The havoc, hardship and economic loss that this would cause to the Rock would be considerable.

Naturally, the effects of such an unlawful move would be felt also in relations between Britain and Spain. The British Government could not allow such a policy, if put into effect, to go unchallenged. When the Prime Minister, Edward Heath, took us formally into the European Community on January 1, 1973, Gibraltar was accorded special status under Article 227 (4) of the Treaty of Rome, through which it became a member with certain well-defined limitations. These limitations did not affect the right to freedom of

movement for Gibraltarians within Europe, and Spain, at the time of its accession in 1986, was fully aware of the rules.

To an objective observer, the attitude of Spain's Government towards Gibraltar can generate only bewilderment. The people of the Rock have elected the most conciliatory Administration in their history. The Chief Minister, Peter Caruana, was swept to power last May on a platform of dialogue and co-operation with Spain. But what has he got in return from Madrid? Not goodwill; nor even diplomatic correctness. Instead, the Spanish Government has hectoring him, threatened periodically to close the border, and now indicated that it might soon refuse to honour the passports of his people.

Blame for this state of affairs must lie squarely with Abel Matutes, the Spanish Foreign Minister, who has been as inept in his dealings with Gibraltar as he seems bereft of ideas in other areas of international relations. By making absolutely nothing of the opportunities offered by Mr Caruana, Señor Matutes has squandered the best chance Spain has ever had to win hearts and minds in Gibraltar.

These are the truths which Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, must point out to his counterpart next week when he travels to Madrid for talks on the colony. By its threats to the Rock's passports, Spain not only confirms the fears of the many Gibraltarians who distrust "perfidious España" deeply, it succeeds even in alienating that portion of Gibraltar's population which wishes to live in harmony with Spain.

PUMPKINS OF GOLD

Aristotle's Lyceum lives to teach another day

To walk with Aristotle has been the daydream of intellectuals down the ages: the discovery of Aristotle's school under a car park in Athens makes it possible that a few more may walk in his footsteps.

The Lyceum was the forerunner of the modern university. Anyone surprised that the first find at the site was a wrestling ground should consider what succeeding archaeologists and scholars in two thousand years might think of Oxford University: rugby pitches, cricket pavilions and boat-houses survive better than computers or books. The Athenians believed in an all-round education, and the studios among them benefited from the informality of a lecture hall and leisure centre combined.

Today the Lyceum lies at the centre of the modern city, about a mile from the Acropolis. But it stood outside the walls of ancient Athens, in a suburban grove sacred to Apollo the "wolf-killer". Burgers of that city may be embracing their favourite son this week, but in the 4th century BC, as a non-Athenian, Aristotle could not own property. He suffered the additional handicap of having a Macedonian father (equivalent to being of German descent in 1914 London) who was intimate with the royal family of that rising rival power. He became himself the tutor of Alexander the Great and twice had to flee from Athens into exile.

At the centre of the Lyceum was the teacher. Aristotle's works stretched from politics to poetry, mind to magnetism and from antiquarian history to the dynamics of

the River Nile. But, unlike his predecessor Plato, he was not a literary writer. He wrote mostly notes for his lectures and conversations. Although Cicero described Aristotle's writings as "a golden river", he was either flattering or describing a resource to be mined by himself and others. Philosophers have been mining gold from Aristotle's Lyceum notes ever since.

A comic poet once portrayed Aristotle standing benevolently over a crowd of young men "portentously trying to define whether a pumpkin is a vegetable, a grass or a tree". But for scientists as late as Harvey and Darwin the scientific and classificatory works of Aristotle were still bringing ideas. Sixteen lines in his *De Anima* have sparked more modern study of mind and thought than any other passage in history.

Only four fifths of Aristotle's known works survive. The library at the school is almost certain to have been shredded by rebuilding and it would be extraordinary if any new whole books should survive. Nor is a philosopher's school ever likely to be as revealing as an artist's studio. The Greek archaeologist who compared the events this week to finding "the workshop of Leonardo da Vinci" was indulging in traditional Greek hyperbole.

But even ashes from the Lyceum may fascinate. In the architecture of modern Elea still stand clues to the mind of Parmenides; students of Russell and Wittgenstein dabble purposefully in the day-to-day detritus of their lives. So may it be for Aristotle too.

FO support for the Serbian protesters

From the Foreign Secretary

Sir, Your letter of January 15, "The silent Secretary", emphasised the need for Western Governments to give public support to those brave people in Serbia who are protesting at the attempts of their Government to annul the recent local elections.

I agree wholeheartedly. I have publicly condemned the annulment of opposition victories by the Serbian authorities. On December 2, I said that if Serbia wished to become a full member of the European family of nations, it had to respect democratic institutions and election results — precisely the point made in your letter.

Public statements are an important way of conveying international pressure. But they are not enough. We need action by governments, and in the appropriate international bodies. I wrote to President Milosevic urging him to recognise the opposition victories. I cancelled the visit to the UK of Mr Sainovic, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), which had been arranged for mid-December. I strongly supported the EU decision to suspend the planned extension of autonomous trade measures to the FRY. And I decided that we should step up our existing contacts with the FRY opposition: our Ambassador in Belgrade is in daily touch with them and one of their leaders, Mr Djindjic, has been invited to visit London. We have given strong, direct support to the independent media in Serbia, as part of our primary objective — a democratic Serbia.

This is hardly silence. On the contrary, it goes well beyond the statements which we have agreed in the EU and with our Contact Group partners.

Yours sincerely,
MALCOLM RIFKIND,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
Downing Street (West), SW1,
January 15.

Leaving hospital

From Mr Nigel H. Harris

Sir, Dr Stuart Sanders (letter, January 8) comments on early premature discharge of private patients from hospital. This has occurred on a regular basis in recent years in regard to NHS patients — usually to comply with the rules of the internal market and the patient's charter. When a disaster occurs there is media comment; from time to time there has been legal action against doctors and hospitals.

Discharge of patients from hospital is the sole responsibility of a doctor — usually a consultant. They should not allow their clinical judgment to be compromised by pressure from hospital managers and insurance companies.

In the event of a patient suffering harm in these circumstances, the doctor will be liable because of a failure in their duty of care. Their action would be considered indefensible.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL HARRIS
(Consultant orthopaedic surgeon),
72 Harley Street, W1,
January 10.

Quite the proper style

From Mr Dennis Barker

Sir, I am bewildered by the almost universal ridicule in the press of the local hat the Prime Minister wore on his visit to the Indian sub-continent.

Why, except in the unconsciously racist mind, is this hat any more intrinsically ludicrous than the bowler, the top-hat, the boater, the pull-on woolly, the Panama or the fedora?

Why (Peter Brooke's cartoon to-day) does wearing it as a light-hearted courtesy to his hosts make John Major comparable with a clown?

Yours sincerely,
DENNIS BARKER,
67 Speldhurst Road, Chiswick, W4,
January 15.

Labour and the Lords

From Mr M. A. Griffiths

Sir, The question is not whether Jack Straw is descended from a 17th-century royal bastard (letter, January 15). The question is whether he would claim a lifelong hereditary seat in the legislature as a result.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN GRIFFITHS,
122 Westbourne Grove,
Notting Hill, W11,
January 15.

Future of Royal Yacht

From Mr Hugh Hanning

Sir, Why cannot any future Royal Yacht be used, as always intended, in a humanitarian role ("Royal Yacht decision" may be too late for the millennium)?, report, January 3; letters, December 17 and 28.

When a major disaster strikes near a coastline, the Americans can immediately direct warships to the area after a Pentagon/State Department dialogue which can get a decision within a couple of hours.

Britain, however, does not have a fraction of America's warships, nor does it have effective machinery for the dispatch of those we have. It took

Labour record on education reform

From Mr Nicholas Bennett

Sir, It is really too late for Labour to claim they are the party of education reform ("Blair sets sights on new deal for schools", report, January 13).

Over the years my wife and I have served as Conservative school governors on schools in an inner London Labour borough. Every time the Government has introduced a new education reform the Labour governors, with the support of the local education authority, have done everything in their power to undermine them: national testing, the National Curriculum, grant-maintained status, Ofsted inspections, the publication of examination results — you name it they campaigned against it. Dare to suggest any tried and traditional teaching methods and one would go home to the sound of Labour governors' jeers.

If they were really interested they could have taken action years ago, for Labour or their Liberal Democrat allies control the vast majority of LEAs. Indeed, the highest spending, poorest performing councils are all Labour controlled and have been for many years. So bad are they that Mr Blair and Mrs Harman send their children out of the boroughs controlled by the Labour Party and off to grant-maintained schools.

The real party of education is the Tory Party. Whether it has been the expansion of higher and further education, school reform or the introduction of nursery vouchers, it has been the Conservatives who have had the courage to introduce them, often in the face of stiff opposition from the union-led education establishment.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS BENNETT
(Conservative MP for
Pembroke, 1987-92),
86 Tilehurst Road,
Reading, Berkshire,
January 13.

Law enforcement on drink-driving

From Mr Michael Gould

Sir, Professor K. T. V. Grattan's letter of January 7, suggesting that stopping and breath-testing at random by the police is already taking place, calls for comment.

Section 163 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 gives general power to a constable in uniform to stop a motor vehicle: this is regardless of whether the constable suspects drink-driving or any other offence. Once having stopped a motorist, unless there has been an accident, the constable may only lawfully require a breath test under Section 6 of the Act if he has reasonable cause to suspect the motorist has alcohol in his body or has committed a traffic offence while the vehicle was in motion: in practice the police usually rely on the former of the two grounds available as justification for administering a test.

As Professor Grattan suggests, the extremely small failure rate of 1 per cent in two areas of the country over the Christmas period raises suspicions of random testing, in which case the police are acting unlawfully. It is not conclusive, however, as the police could conceivably be testing large numbers who drink but stay under the limit.

I also understand that over this period the police was to breath-test drivers involved in every accident they were called to, however minor.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL GOULD,
Staffordshire University,
Law School,
Leek Road, Stoke-on-Trent.

From Mr Andrew Wales

Sir, HM Coroner for South Yorkshire (East) writes (letter, January 7) that

In the steps of Todd

From Dr D. H. Sharp

Sir, Your excellent obituary of Lord Todd (January 15) mentions the disrespectful nickname used by his students of "Todd Almighty". There was, however, the rather more endearing name of "Toddlers" given to those distinguished chemists who followed his example by moving from Manchester University to Cambridge.

He told me this himself when he was the President of the Society of Chemical Industry, an office he held in 1981-82.

Yours faithfully,
D. H. SHARP
(General Secretary, Society of
Chemical Industry, 1967-82),
Greenhill House, Shoreham Road,
Oxford, Sevenoaks, Kent.

forever for one warship to be sent to Bangladesh from Karachi following the floods of 1991, while US ships equipped with huge medical facilities were queuing up.

Earlier, in August 1988, also in Bangladesh, a British aircraft carrier urgently needed was actually passing en route to Australia, but was not diverted because, as I understand it, the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) considered that MoD charges were excessive.

They were right. Chiefs of Staff in my experience will testify that huge Treasury charges price them out of the ODA market. Unlike some other countries, allowance is not deducted for the high training value of disaster relief.

From Mr Geoffrey J. Samuel

Sir, I regard the impudence of Mr Tony Blair as breathtaking. During 23 years as headmaster of a comprehensive school I saw how necessary it was for central government to legislate in an attempt to counter the policies and practices of Labour-controlled LEAs.

It was a Labour LEA which added the slogan "socialism at work" in the mid-1980s to all its advertisements in the educational press; it was the director of education in a Labour authority who hoped that none of the pupils would apply to Oxford and Cambridge; and the effect of the discouragement of competitive games could, in my view, be seen both at the Atlanta Olympics and recently in Zimbabwe.

I saw at first hand the consequences of rating the politics of gender, class and race above traditional standards and the effect of labelling the pursuit of excellence as "elitism". Never once in 23 years did I attend a meeting or discussion concerned with academic standards. Levelling was the order of the day — even if it meant levelling down.

Those of us with such experience are rightly angry when we see the leader of a party which espoused the notion of "socialism in action" posturing as the defender of those standards which Labour LEAs did so much to destroy. I hope the electorate will take note of Mr Blair's actions rather than his words: after all he could have sent his own sons to a comprehensive in a typical Labour LEA.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFFREY J. SAMUEL
(Headmaster, The Heathland School,
Hounslow, 1973-96),
25 Thurnby Court,
Wellesley Road,
Twickenham, Middlesex,
January 13.

By any other name

From Mr George B. Lockes

Sir, Contrary to your report of January 6, "Mandela ousted as student bar hero" (see also leading article, January 6; letter, January 7), the Mandela bar at Leicester University was renamed The Oasis in the summer of 1994, before the ascent to fame of the popular beat combo of that name.

The bar is a watering hole for thirsty students. There is nothing more to it than that.

Yours faithfully,
G. B. LOCKES
(Postgraduate researcher),
University of Leicester,
School of Medicine,
PO Box 138,
University Road, Leicester,
January 10.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN ARCHER,
41 Old Orchard, Harlow, Essex,
January 7.

Sir, It is just not good enough to exhort people not to drink and drive, while the law says, in effect, that a modest amount of alcohol is acceptable. It is virtually impossible to spell out in meaningful terms just what is a modest amount. The law does not do it, but does impose a mandatory driving ban should the driver get it wrong.

All motor vehicles must, by law, be fitted with a speedometer to enable the driver to obey the speed limit. With alcohol, for which exceeding the limit carries a much more severe penalty, the driver has to guess.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN ARCHER,
41 Old Orchard, Harlow, Essex,
January 7.

Howard's bid

From Mr David Laws

Sir, "Can anyone stop Michael Howard?" In his bid for the leadership of the Conservative Party, asks Peter Riddell (January 14).

The answer, your readers will be relieved to know, is that the electorate can. In the next general election Michael Howard will be defending a majority of 8,910 at Folkestone and Hythe, one of the most marginal seats held by a Cabinet Minister, against a strong Liberal Democrat challenge and a potentially damaging Referendum Party intervention (Mr John Aspinall).

Conservative MPs may never get the chance to elect as leader the most accident-prone Home Secretary of this century.

Sincerely,
DAVID LAWS (Prospective
parliamentary candidate, Liberal
Democrat, Folkestone and Hythe),
Cullings Hill, Elham, Kent,
January 14.

Clifford 'vendetta'

From Mr Duncan Howarth

Sir, Can it be, do you think, that Mr Max Clifford (reports, January 6, 7, 14; letter, January 7) has been secretly commissioned by the Conservatives to behave in a way calculated to arouse public sympathy for them?

Yours faithfully,
DUNCAN HOWARTH,
Chanctonbury, Pickering Street,
Loose, Maidstone, Kent,
January 14.

New light shed on Shakespeare stars

From the Editor of The Shakespearean Almanac

Sir, Shakespeare was also meditating upon cosmological matters in *Troilus and Cressida* ("Astronomer discovers cast of stars hidden in Hamlet", report, January 14), which he wrote around the same time as *Hamlet*.

The famous speech on degree, in which Ulysses speaks of "the heavens themselves, the planets and this centre", is deliberately ambiguous as to the centre of the solar system. The play includes two allusions to the *Magneis* of William Gilbert (1600), a treatise with strong implications for Copernican cosmology.

Troilus himself must be modelled on Tycho Brahe, the Danish astronomer. When Helen speaks of Troilus's "copper nose" we may take her quite literally. Tycho lost his nose whilst duelling as a youth and, as can be seen in portraits, had thereafter to wear a substitute, made from gold, silver and copper.

Yours faithfully,
PETER ADAMS, Editor,
The Shakespearean Almanac,
33 Vicarage Road, SW4,
January 14.

Globe excavations

From the Chief Executive of the International Shakespeare Globe Centre

Sir, Last week planning permission to bury permanently the remains of the Globe Theatre without further investigation was granted by Southwark Council, so that the site can be developed as new flats (report, January 11).

The site was partially excavated in 1989. The findings revealed crucial evidence about the design and layout of the Globe Theatre that enabled the academics and architects working on the designs of the reconstructed Globe to proceed. However, from the archaeology we cannot be certain about the diameter of the Globe, the orientation of the stage or whether it was square or tapered — as at the Rose Theatre.

The reconstructed Globe is a living, working theatre as well as a laboratory for experiment. We are resolved to adapt the Globe in the light of new information from archaeology, research and playing.

Thus the design of the Globe can never be "permanent" until the original site is excavated to its full potential. While burial of the remains would retain their archaeological information for the future, the implication in the planning permission documents — "for the permanent burial and commemoration" of the original remains — is that this will never happen.

This decision cannot be right in the light of the international academic and scholarly interest in the Globe, the dedication and support of the project from thousands of people from all over the world, and the interest taken by the 300,000 visitors who have come to the exhibition over the last two years.

Whilst the Grade II listed Anchor Terrace building, which stands over much of the remains, should not be disturbed, further excavations are possible. It is to be hoped that the Secretary of State for the Environment will reconsider the planning permission that has been granted and that a broader view can be taken of the importance of these remains.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HOLDEN,
Chief Executive,
International Shakespeare
Globe Centre Ltd,
Bear Gardens, Bankside, SE1,
January 13.

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Sir, "Can anyone stop Michael Howard?" In his bid for the leadership of the Conservative Party, asks Peter Riddell (January 14).

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

THURSDAY JANUARY 16 1997

Tougher rules on holiday failures

By MARIANNE CORPHER

TOUGH new rules to make directors of failed holiday companies personally liable for millions of pounds of travellers' compensation claims have been announced by the Civil Aviation Authority.

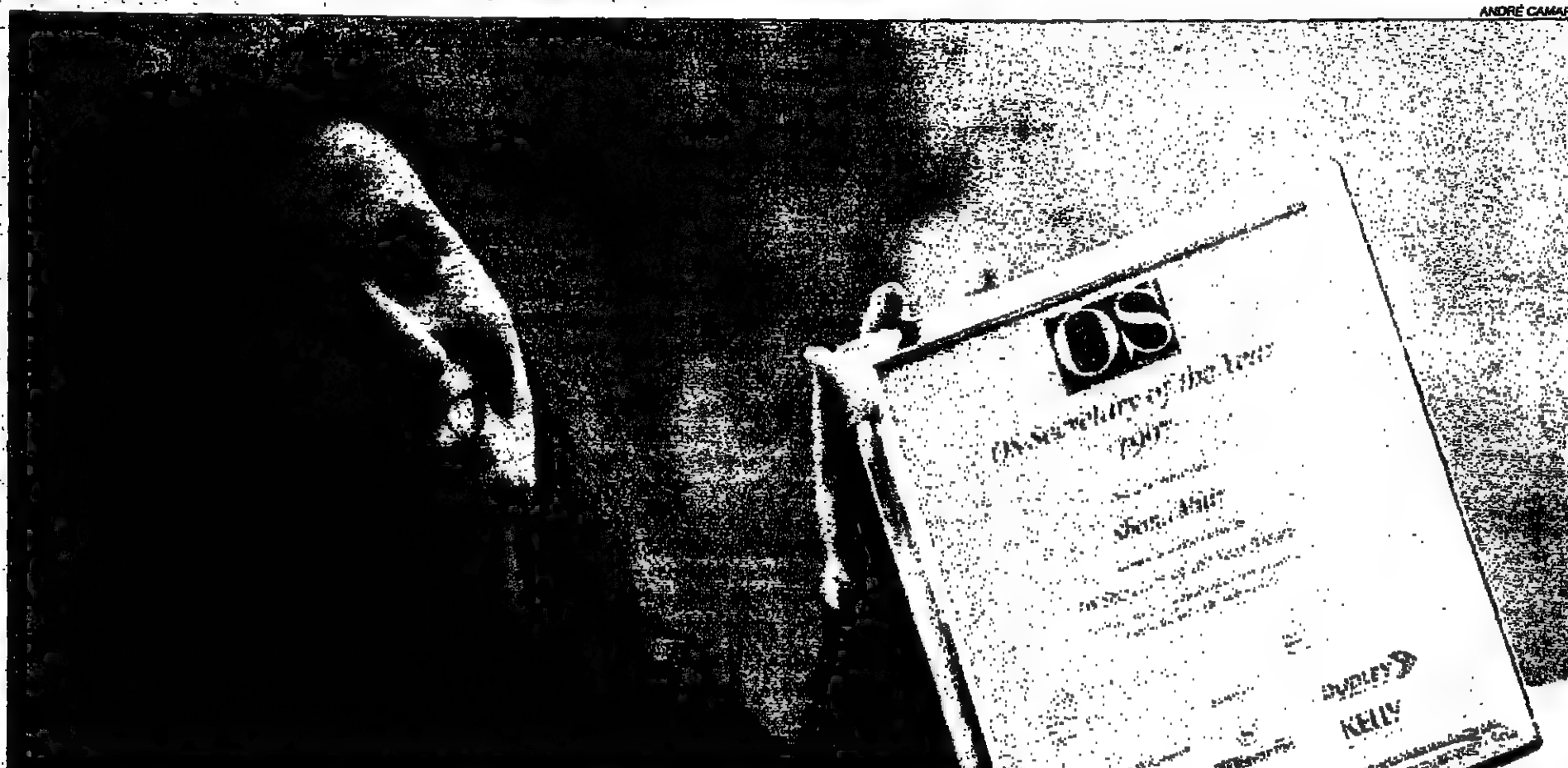
The move follows a number of high-profile failures, among them the Flight Company based in Kingston upon Thames, which collapsed in July last year at a cost of £8 million. It had sold more flights than it was licensed to sell under a bonding arrangement run by the CAA and known as the Air Travel Organisers' Licence (Atol).

The cost of compensating travellers fell on the Air Travel Trust Fund, a pooled fund collected in the past through a levy on passenger tickets. During the last financial year, the CAA refunded 21,000 people and enabled 14,000 to complete their holidays after operators failed.

Last September the CAA issued a consultation document seeking views on how overtrading could be controlled and how to prevent overtrading. The CAA announced it would explore with government whether a new back-up fund might be set up to stand behind Atol and non-financial bonds.

The CAA proposes that directors should be personally liable if they overtrade, and that figures on bookings should be supplied on a monthly basis to the CAA by larger Atol holders. It recommends a specialist CAA team to monitor more closely the business done by licensed companies, and greater powers for the CAA to require information from licence-holders.

Helen Simpson, head of licensing and finance at the CAA, said: "This is a balanced package, which we think will help us to control those who abuse the system without being too restrictive for honest and properly managed firms."



Shona Muir became the Office Secretary of the Year yesterday at a ceremony in London. Ms Muir is PA and office administrator for Raychem, where she works for the UK defence manager in the electronics division. She was presented with her prizes by Judith Hurd, chairman of the Cancer Research Campaign and wife of the former Foreign Secretary

Jobless fall adds to rate rise fears

By JANET BUSH AND PHILIP BASSETT

LONDON'S financial markets spent a nervous session worrying about the outcome of yesterday's monetary meeting, particularly in view of news of an unexpectedly large fall in unemployment in December.

Speculation that Kenneth Clark, the Chancellor, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, would agree on another quarter-point rise in base rates had waned in recent days because of evidence of a disappointing Christmas shopping season and some good inflation figures. But yesterday's unemployment news revived City fears once again.

The Government's headline unemployment total, fell another 45,100 in December to 1,884,700 or 6.7 per cent of the UK workforce, according to the Office for National Statistics. This was the tenth successive monthly fall and took both the unemployment

total and the rate of unemployment to their lowest levels since January 1991.

Unemployment has now dropped 1,096,400 since it last peaked in December 1992 and by 850,800 in the past year.

Despite showing a far smaller fall than the 95,400 decline in November, the figures were strong enough to put the markets back on the defensive. On the stock market, the FT-SE 100 first raced to new records but then retreated on the jobs news. It closed 9.3 points lower at 4,158.9.

The pound, which has profited recently from expectations that rates are heading higher, closed firmer. On its index against a basket of currencies, it finished at 96.3 from 95.9 on Tuesday.

The monetary meeting began as scheduled in mid-afternoon and went on for about an hour and a half. Because the meeting began after the Bank had already

completed its daily money market operations, any signal that rates have been raised is likely to come this morning at just before 10am.

This will coincide with the latest retail prices figures which would have been available at yesterday's monetary meeting and are expected to show the main measures of inflation falling, but only marginally, in December.

Even after the latest jobs figures, the City on balance believes that the Chancellor will have held out against any Bank desire for a rate rise this month, preferring to wait until February's meeting.

One encouraging element of yesterday's labour market statistics was that annual growth in average earnings has remained steady at 4 per cent, suggesting that steep declines in unemployment is not putting significant upward pressure on wages.

Simon Briscoe, UK economist at Nikko Europe, said:

"The inflationary pressures are not obvious — they are only there for those that want to see them. The massive fall in unemployment in November now seems to be an erratic and no one in their right mind could creditably use that as an excuse for higher rates. We expect the question of rates to be addressed in February."

Ministers immediately praised the fall in unemployment as evidence of the success of its economic and labour market policies. But their optimistic assessment was somewhat undermined by Whitehall statisticians being forced to suspend their usual monthly estimates of the trend of unemployment reductions because of the difficulty of analysing a number of special factors, chief of which is the introduction last October of the jobseeker's allowance.

Labour yesterday denounced official unemployment data as "figures of fantasy".

MPs' anger over £50m savings loss

By ADAM JONES

MEMBERS of Parliament investigating a £50 million "black hole" in the accounts of National Savings yesterday described its procedures as shambolic and inadequate.

At a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee, Peter Bareaud, chief executive of National Savings, said that the £50 million shortfall had been reduced to £3 million after internal investigations.

The "black hole" in investment and ordinary accounts was exposed last October by the National Audit Office (NAO). Mike Hall, a Labour MP, accused National Savings of incompetence. Tim

Smith, a Conservative MP, said it was thoroughly inadequate that only two forms of National Savings — investment and deposit accounts — were audited by the NAO. From 1996-97, it will check all product accounts.

Mr Smith also said that the Treasury should not escape blame. National Savings has been an executive agency with a certain degree of autonomy since July 1996.

Mr Bareaud partly blamed outdated computer systems and said that National Savings had failed to develop a close enough relationship with the NAO.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET

FTSE 100	4158.9	(-9.3)
FTSE All share	2040.18	(-2.40)
Nikkei	Closed	
Dow Jones	6718.80	(-43.49)*
S&P Composite	785.68	(-3.20)*

UNIT RATE

Federal Funds	5.00%	(5.00%)
Long Bond	96.0%	(96.0%)
Yield	8.80%	(8.77%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month Interbank	8.00%	(8.00%)
12m long gft	108.0%	(108.0%)

STERLING

New York	1.6780*	(1.6715)
London		
DM	1.8786	(1.8690)
DM	2.5654	(2.5603)
FF	8.9962	(8.9797)
SP	2.2889	(2.2977)
Yen	196.42	(195.05)
S index	98.3	(98.5)

US DOLLAR

London	1.8816*	(1.8820)
DM	1.8720*	(1.8700)
FF	1.3735*	(1.3725)
Yen	117.22*	(116.93)
S index	98.3	(98.5)

Yen close Yen 116.58

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Mar)	\$22.80	(\$23.00)
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GOLD

London close	\$384.15	(\$387.45)
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* denotes midday trading price

Mixed message

Retailers sent out contrasting messages about Christmas trading. The Body Shop revealed a sales dip and Kingfisher a successful Christmas, with Comet and B&Q its star performers. **Page 25, Times 26**

Profits blow

Stanley Leisure suffered a £2 million loss in profits from the record seven winners ridden by the jockey, Frankie Dettori, at Ascot in the autumn. Profits still rose 21 per cent. **Page 28, Times 26**

Esso pays £200m price for watching superstores

By CARL MORTSHED

ESSO'S Pricewatch campaign is believed to have cost the oil company £200 million last year but the policy of matching the lowest competing local price at the petrol pump will continue.

The company confirmed yesterday that its profits had suffered from Pricewatch but said it believed the campaign was successful in restoring market share lost to discounters, mainly the food superstores.

Esso claims to have re-

claimed 1 million customers but Wood Mackenzie, the oil consultant, believes that Esso sacrificed a third of its UK profits in an effort to match superstore pump prices.

Wood Mackenzie questions the wisdom of the oil company's strategy of selling petrol on price alone. The effect on profit margins was worst in the second quarter of last year, when a combination of rising oil prices and weak petrol retail prices squeezed the retailer's margin to as little as 2p per litre.

According to Wood Mac-

kenzie, 2p is the lowest margin at which even the large superstore sites can break even selling huge volumes of petrol. Smaller independents need to earn more than 6p per litre to make a profit. Some 1,500-2,000 sites are believed to have closed last year but Wood Mackenzie reckons that rate may slow.

Rising crude oil prices have helped retailers to disguise the increased margins, despite a glut of unleaded gasoline in the wholesale market. As a result average margins have edged up to 5p per litre.

Lanica statement aims to end speculation

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SHARES of Lanica Trust, the wonder stock whose meteoric rise has had traders baffled, are expected to open sharply lower today after the company issued a statement designed to end speculation that it has a huge deal in the pipeline.

The statement, issued at the request of the Stock Exchange but after the close of trading, said Lanica was unaware of any reasons for its shares' "substantial" rise over recent months.

Lanica's shares rose from just 58p in September to a

peak of £20.50 three months later, boosted by rumours that Littlewoods wanted to back its retail business into the company to gain a stock market listing.

Littlewoods' denial of the story two weeks ago sent the shares lower but they then stabilised and closed yesterday at £15.50.

As an investment company, Lanica cannot spend more than 20 per cent of its gross assets on any one investment, it pointed out. Its assets, according to a spokesman, are around £3.2 million.

Kleinwort seeks £100,000 from Tim Horlick

By ROBERT MILLER
BANKING CORRESPONDENT



Horlick went to Salomon

KLEINWORT BENSON, one of the City's leading fund managers, is seeking up to £100,000 in damages from Tim Horlick, husband of Nicola Horlick, who was suspended from her job as head of Morgan Grenfell's £18 billion pension fund business on Tuesday.

As Morgan Grenfell yesterday continued its investigation into a possible breach of contract by Mrs Horlick, Kleinwort confirmed that it is in litigation with her husband. The legal action stems from his leaving Kleinwort last summer

to take up a senior post with Salomon Brothers. An injunction demanding that he return confidential documents and refrain from approaching former colleagues was backed by a judge in chambers and Kleinwort is now seeking damages. A spokesman said: "Mr Horlick committed a serious breach of his legal obligations as a director and we are seeking a satisfactory settlement."

The Morgan Grenfell inquiry relating to Mrs Horlick, who is believed to have earned £1.5 million, centres on talks that she had with a view to joining ABN Amro, the Dutch bank, although no final offer is said to have been tabled. Morgan Grenfell,

owned by Deutsche Bank, became concerned after hearing reports from staff and clients that up to 12 of Mrs Horlick's team might consider joining her.

Inquiries by *The Times* have established that Mrs Horlick approached Mercury Asset Management, the employer that she left for Morgan Grenfell in 1991, with a view to rejoining it. She is believed to have offered herself and several others and suggested a senior position, possibly vice-chairman. Mercury is said to have declined the approach.

*Superwoman' lifestyle, page 5
Pennington, page 25

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BY OLIVER AUGUST

BY OLIVER AUGUST

The share price decline is the result of prolonged profit-taking and worries over an uncertain future for Telekom after deregulation in 1998. Another factor in the slip is Telekom's decision not to release 1996 earnings until mid-March.

Ian Byatt, head of Ofwat, told the Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee that he was considering a one-

Geraint Mills, site engineer, with a plume of water at Hyder's Llyn Brianne hydro electric power station in west Wales, which was opened yesterday by Richard Page, Minister for Energy at the Department of Trade and Industry.

FROM LEYLA LINTON

A Government spokesman said: "The limit of 12,500 euros on the money-back guarantee means that for a large proportion of transactions, consumers and SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) will not be assured of getting all their money back if the bank fails to deliver a credit transfer."

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT



FROM A CORRESPONDENT

The Woolwich already has a joint venture with Legal & General to provide household insurance. The Woolwich Insurance Services division contributed £11.3 million profit to the society in the first nine months of last year. The society has typically arranged household insurance for around 75 per cent of its eligible borrowers.

Civil actions have been brought in Jersey's Royal Court by Mayo and Troy on behalf of the investors against Accrante, Touche Ross, the accountants, and Mr Young. It is claimed that Mr Young's deals were subject to a 10 per

WERU, the German window and door manufacturer that is 79.9 per cent owned by Caradon, the UK building products company, said that it expected 1997 profits to show little change from the levels of 1996, reflecting difficult market conditions. According to preliminary figures, Weru's 1996 operating profit was between DM31 million and DM32 million. The company also said that it expected Caradon to make an offer for the outstanding shares during the course of this year.

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LEGAL NOTICES

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Mo. 006737 of 1996

idents, he said that some
panies should not raise a

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Austria \$	13.90
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Cyprus Cyp.	0.822
Denmark Mk.	10.20
France Fr.	8.61
France Fr.	9.38
Germany DM.	4.92
Hong Kong \$	2.61
India Rs.	1.24
Indonesia Rp.	1.00
Israel \$	5.70
Italy Lit.	0.059
Japan Yen	230.70
Netherlands Gld.	1.72
New Zealand \$	2.02
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هكذا في الأصل

Radical plans for DSS cost-cutting Guinness plays a waiting game When loyalty is a rare commodity

Properties in a PRIME location

THERE is no good reason, other than for the purpose of ritual humiliation or ensuring the black economy shuts down for one day in seven, why the unemployed and other benefits claimants should have to make a weekly visit to their local Department of Social Security office.

For that matter there is no real reason why there should be 700 DSS offices scattered across the country, each seemingly dedicated to providing the best example of 1960s Neo-Brutalist public corporation architecture. These property assets are so extensive and so widespread that the DSS, even with its £85 billion annual budget, cannot afford to maintain them properly.

Ten per cent of them are empty; many have negative value, the cost of repairing them more than they are worth in good condition. And still the social security budget rises.

Three City groups, led by NationsBank, Goldman Sachs and Nomura, will on January 31 place their bids to take over the DSS properties and ensure a reduction in running costs over the next 20 years. The PRIME project, part of the Government's Private Finance Initiative, is arguably the most important privatisation since water and electricity. At the heart of the argument is the same old axiom that any public sector monopoly

is eventually going to be run on behalf of its employees.

A utility can be cut loose, management incentivised to ensure the customer comes first. It does not always work that way, but so goes the ideology. But how do you impose the same public sector disciplines on a government department?

The solution being tried at the DSS, and to be followed if successful at other high-spending departments such as the Inland Revenue, is to require a one-off payment for the transfer of the property — £250 million this time, about 30 per cent of which will fall empty over the next 15 years and be available, along with the properties already unused, for redevelopment.

The parties will also bid in what they will charge annually, a figure easily expected to top £100 million, to maintain the properties and provide cleaning, catering and security services — this last is especially important. Have you ever wondered why the chairs in DSS offices are bolted to the floor?

Further cost savings identified over the 20 years of the contract

will be split between Government and contractor, on a percentage basis that will be an element of the three bids. The imponderables are how much of the £3 billion-plus running costs at the DSS can be cut, and how much of the savings will go to the taxpayer. As important is the Group Four factor — the contractors must be efficient, and be seen to be so.

Labour is putting up some cosmetic Parliamentary questions next Monday about job losses. But the party is not inimical to the idea. Tony Blair is himself no fan of the public sector unions.

Patience may be good for you

GUINNESS seems to have adopted the company's quality control guidance as part of its corporate strategy. It takes time, as any properly trained publican will tell you, to pour a decent pint of Guinness stout properly. It is taking time, Tony Greener tells the City, for the quality of the business to show through.



Guinness is, of course, only suffering from the same malaise as the other drinks companies — declining volumes in the mature Western markets and consequent vicious competition. But the fact that it is more focused than any of its main rivals — normally seen as a virtue in these post-conglomerate days — has, strangely, exaggerated the market's negative sentiment.

Allied Domecq remains in a mess, with its management likely to reap the rewards of any improvement in performance. Grand Metropolitan is also working hard at tidying up — although in the spirits business it has stolen a march on its rivals by increasing its marketing spend earlier in the cycle.

Guinness's apparent lack of options, other than sitting tight and praying, was highlighted last summer by the fiasco of the GrandMet bid that never was but still managed to leak into the press and the market. Recent rumours linking Mr Greener and his gang with Matthew Clark, the troubled cider company, appear little more than wishful thinking, highlighting the absence of suitable acquisition targets elsewhere.

But there is some logic in the company's claim that more of the same will eventually lead to an upturn in profits. The gradual shift in spirit sales away from the mature Western markets should soon ensure that these markets no longer act as a drag on volume growth, and Guinness is especially strong in the Asia-Pacific region that already contributes around one-third of all group profits.

Until the company reaps the rewards of its emerging market exposure, the company has the cash to keep shareholders sweet through rising dividends and even share buy-backs if the management so decides. The problem is

the City, unlike the dancing man in the famous adverts, may have better things to do with its money in the meantime.

High season for poachers

SOMETIMES it is better to shut the stable door quietly again rather than head off into the empty fields clutching a halter. The battles between the Horlicks and their employers will provide little except ammunition for critics of high City pay.

This is the poaching season in the Square Mile, just after the year-end bonuses are paid. Nicola Horlick seems to have misjudged the timing, as Deutsche Morgan Grenfell has yet to hand the cash over and she is going to have to whistle for hers.

Her husband Tim made his move last summer, and the cheque in his case could be heading the other way. Kleinwort Benson is suing for an amount that appears to be designed more as a punishment, *pour décourager les autres*, than as compensation for

any damage he may or may not have done. A court case has already required the handing back of some information that seems to have left Fenchurch Street with him.

His wife is not going to stay between jobs for long, even if the affair leaves some doubt over her loyalty to any future employer. Morgan Grenfell, embroiled last year in its own legal action over alleged poaching of staff from ING Barings, is in no position to adopt a lofty moral position.

If poaching is inevitable, and it always will be in a high-flier culture where loyalty is owed only to the last pay packet, perhaps the City's fund managers, brokers and merchant banks should lay down some ground-rules between themselves. Theft of staff while you are still under the same roof as them is clearly not on. Theft of staff after you have left is to be expected.

Attempts to damage your former employer while working elsewhere, for example by using information improperly acquired, will be met with punitive court action, unless it is in the normal course of business. Otherwise, anything goes. The winners, under such rules, will be employers who create a culture of staff loyalty through longer-term incentives than this year's bonus cheque.

AMR lifts quarter's earnings by \$32m

BY JON ASHWORTH
AMERICAN AIRLINES, parent company of American Airlines, lifted fourth quarter net earnings to \$122 million from \$90 million in the same period in 1995. The results take AMR's full-year 1996 earnings, excluding special items, to \$894 million, compared with \$551 million in 1995.

Fourth-quarter results were boosted by a \$497 million gain on the initial public offering of the SABRE Group, a collection of IT companies that includes AMR's ticketing and reservations system. The gain was partially offset by a \$251 million charge associated with AMR's investment in Canadian Airlines.

AMR recorded a \$26 million charge against writting down the value of aircraft interiors. Including special items, 1996 net earnings were \$1 billion (\$662 million), or \$11.63 (\$2.11) per common share. Robert Crandall, chairman of chief executive of AMR, did not comment on the proposed alliance with British Airways, which threatens to cement the carrier's dominance of UK-US air routes. The two airlines recently filed for anti-trust immunity for the alliance. BA is due to publish its third quarter results next month, its tenth anniversary as a privatised company.

Meanwhile, the European Commission has threatened to fine KLM and Northwest for failing to provide details of their alliance. The move follows claims by American and BA that the Commission has unfairly singled them out over their proposed alliance. BA says none of the alliances between US and European airlines has been examined.

The Commission is studying the competition implications of various alliances, including KLM-Northwest. United has linked with Lufthansa and SAS, and Delta has tied with Swissair.

Retailers report mixed Christmas trading results

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

RETAILERS sent out contrasting messages about Christmas trading yesterday. The Body Shop revealed a dip in sales and Kingfisher reported a successful Christmas, with Comet and B&Q its star performers.

The latest batch of Christmas trading statements, which were also issued by Aldi and Laura Ashley, confirmed that for most retailers the expected festive boom failed to materialise, with only a handful enjoying an outstanding season.

Conrad Rodick, chairman of the Body Shop, said that worldwide, comparable sales

were down 2 per cent in the ten weeks to January 4 and were flat in the first 11 months of the current year. These figures were mirrored by its UK stores. In the US, comparable sales were down 2 per cent in the Christmas period, and 3 per cent over the 44 weeks, while in Asia like-for-like sales were 4 per cent ahead over the 44 weeks but 4 per cent behind over Christmas.

Mr Rodick said that the slowdown in Asia reflects "softer seasonal trading in a number of territories". But he added that total sales growth continues to be fuelled by the strong expansion programme

in Asia; this pushed overall sales in the region up by 49 per cent over 44 weeks. Body Shop shares slipped 4½p to 191p.

At Kingfisher, Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, chief executive, reported a rise of 7.8 per cent in comparable sales. At Comet, the electrical goods retailer, they were 14 per cent ahead, while at B&Q, the DIY market leader, they rose 10.5 per cent.

Woolworths, benefiting from the refitting of some stores, enjoyed an 8.1 per cent rise in like-for-like sales. Kingfisher shares slipped 15½p to 654½p, as profit-taking ended a strong run. Sir Geoffrey said that the good Christmas meant the group was on track to achieve its targets for the year.

Christmas sales were 3 per cent ahead at Laura Ashley in the six weeks to January 4, with the UK showing a 10 per cent rise in like-for-like sales. Worldwide, comparable sales were 1 per cent higher for the 23 weeks to January 4. In the US, like-for-like sales were up 1 per cent over Christmas, while over the 23-week period they were down 7 per cent.

Among smaller retailers, Aldi reported that like-for-like sales were 11.6 per cent ahead of last year. Q&S Holdings, the discount clothing retailer, said that it enjoyed 7 per cent growth in like-for-like sales in the second half of the year, despite weaker sales in December.



Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy: group on track to achieve targets

Temps, page 26

Fall for East Midlands

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

EAST MIDLANDS Electricity, which is being taken over by Dominion Resources, the US utility, saw half-year pre-tax profits fall to £80 million from £96.7 million.

In common with all of the regional electricity companies, East Midlands blamed the drop for the six months to September 30 on the impact of

the latest distribution price review. Its comparable figures for 1995 were also flattered by an £8 million gain from the sale of non-core businesses.

Profits in the distribution arm fell from £80.7 million in 1995 to £68.4 million. Better fortunes in the electricity and gas supply business, where volume grew 3.6 per cent,

helped to offset the knock to distribution. Sales in the competitive market to industrial and commercial users rose nearly 6 per cent.

The financial results, originally due last month, were delayed pending the agreed bid from Dominion. The US company is likely to keep the present management structure.

Irish ship line hit by Bell stake

IRISH Continental Group, the shipping company that operates between the Republic of Ireland, the UK and continental Europe, suffered a slight fall in pre-tax profits in the year to October largely because of its stake in the troubled Bell Lines freight company (Eileen McCabe writes).

Irish Continental's 25 per cent share of Bell returned a loss of Ir£1.5 million (Ir£760,000 profit the previous year). Irish Continental also made an exceptional provision of Ir£1.6 million against a loan to Bell.

In contrast, Irish Continental recorded a 9 per cent increase in turnover. There is a final dividend of Ir£3.6p a share, due March 27, giving a total dividend of Ir£5.4p, an increase of 20 per cent on the previous year.

Strong pound will hit profits, says Guinness

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

GUINNESS yesterday gave warning that the rising pound could knock £60 million off 1997 profits (See Pennington, this page).

The company said in a trading statement that although there had been no material change in trading outlook, sterling's recent strength against the dollar and European currencies would have a negative effect on profits.

However, Guinness added that hedging activities would have a positive effect of about £15 million on 1996 profits. There would also be a saving in interest charges in 1997, estimated by analysts at about £15 million, because the company has been able to refinance much of its currency debt in shorter-dated maturities at lower interest rates. Guinness shares drifted down 5p, to 431p, after the



Greener: beer output up

statement. Grand Metropolitan's shares also fell — by 6p to 428½p — with the market worried about the effect of the rising pound on its profits.

Guinness, of which Anthony Greener is executive chairman, said that United Distillers, its spirit division, had raised overall volumes by 1 per cent, with

growth strongest in single malts and premium Scotch blends. United Distillers also succeeded in raising prices by an average of 1.5 per cent — with 3 per cent increases achieved in the US, the UK, and Latin America — enabling the division to maintain overall profits. United Distillers raised its investment costs by 10 per cent over the year.

Guinness Brewing Worldwide raised beer volumes by 2 per cent and achieved an increase in overall profits, the company said. Sales of Guinness stout grew by 5 per cent, and Kilkenny Irish Ale, the company's new smoothbrow product, made a strong start.

The beer market remained difficult in Spain, with volumes 4 per cent down and margins hit by a shift to cheaper take-home brands. However, Guinness said Cruzcampo, its Spanish subsidiary, should maintain its profits contribution.

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Tele-Cine warning follows defections

BY FRASER NELSON

THE DEFECTION of the core creative team from Tele-Cine Cell has left a larger than expected hole in its profits, the television production company said yesterday.

While the six executives who left in May have been replaced, Tele-Cine said that many key clients had followed them and left a serious dent in summer profits. It gave warning that the recovery was taking much longer than the City expected.

Its shares lost 30 per cent of their value yesterday, tumbling from 52½p to a new low of 37½p, before closing at 40p.

Nick Igoe, finance director, said that while the final dividend would be below the 3.7p issued last time, the company would be unlikely to pass on the dividend altogether.

Most members of the special effects team which resigned have since joined The Mill, a rival studio that was rumoured to be moving into films. The team's credits include the paint-splashing BBC2 logo and the Guinness advertisement that takes its viewers from a pint glass to outer space and back to the pint.

During 1995, Tele-Cine returned a 39 per cent decline in pre-tax profits, to £1.4 million. Analysts are looking for the same figure for 1996, but Tele-Cine gave warning that the results, due in March, would show profits "materially below" this figure.

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Strength of the pound hits Guinness for £60m

BIG overseas earners suffered as the extent of the damage to profits arising from sterling's strength became apparent.

The pessimism followed a trading update from Guinness down 5p at 431p, which warned the market that it expected to take a £60 million hit on its currency transactions during 1997. The blame was placed squarely on sterling, which has accrued in value against the dollar and other European currencies. This makes Guinness less competitive abroad and vulnerable to currency losses once trading profits are translated back into sterling.

The problem could become worse if the Chancellor raises interest rates. This could attract more foreign investors to the pound and in turn drive sterling even higher. Most big companies hedge their currency needs on the futures market, but the pound's recent meteoric rise may have caught them out.

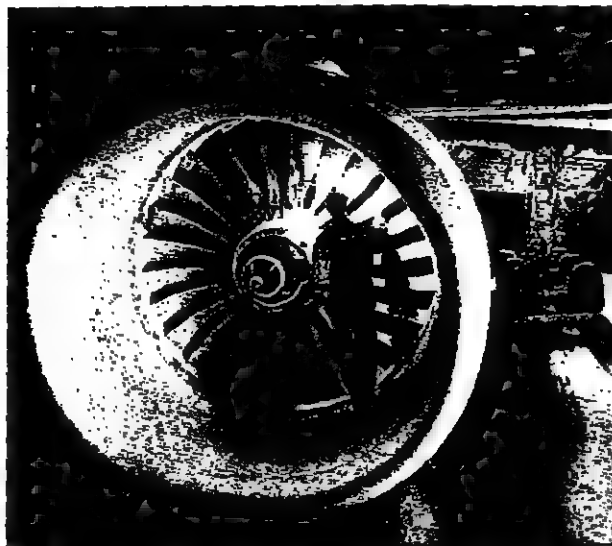
Other companies deemed to suffer include Reuters, down 21p at 232p. Rolls-Royce, 9p off at 232p, and Smiths Industries, 17p lower at 760p.

The rest of the equity market enjoyed an early mark-up, enabling it to extend this week's record-breaking run on the back of a strong performance by Wall Street overnight. But the gains were not held and prices soon went into reverse as investors waited to see if the Chancellor would raise interest rates after his monthly economic meeting with the Governor of the Bank of England.

After a near 44-point turnaround, the FT-SE 100 index was able to close above the worst of the day with the help of a late run in the futures market. The index finished 9.3 down at 4,158.9 as turnover reached 882 million shares.

The banks enjoyed another sharp mark-up with the help of positive comments from several brokers. Stock shares only fuelled the gains. Standard Chartered rose 33p to 744p on a buy recommendation from SBC Warburg, the broker. Merrill Lynch likes the sector, as does Lehman Brothers and HSBC James Capel.

The strong rise in share prices overnight in Hong Kong supported HSBC, up 40p at £14.26. Royal Bank of Scotland also extended this week's lead with a rise of 4 1/2p at 567p.



Fear of sterling's rise drove Rolls-Royce down 9p

Cookson rose 7p to 260p on the back of a big jump in profits from Intel, the US microchip manufacturer. ABN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker, has pointed out that the shares are at a 10 per cent discount to the market.

Revived bid talk lifted Zeneca 29p to £16.53. JP Morgan, the US investment bank, was pushing Roche

holdings in any one investment restricted to 20 per cent. The shares finished 12p down at £15.50.

Frankie Detton's record seven consecutive wins at Ascot in September has cost Stanley Leisure, the betting and gaming group, dearly. The company described it as the "worst day ever" costing an estimated £2 million. Even

with overall sales up 11.7 per cent at £1.46 billion.

Adders also warned of news of buoyant trading conditions with a rise of 8 1/2p at 168p. Trading profits were running "substantially" ahead of last year.

It was a different story for Anita Roddick's Body Shop, which dipped 4 1/2p to 19p after a lukewarm response by brokers to the group's trading statement.

A 3 per cent increase in like-for-like sales at Laura Ashley over the Christmas period failed to make much impression, with the shares ending 1p easier at 158p.

Profit-taking in the wake of Tuesday's trading news left Matthew Clark 18p lower at 314p. Profit-taking also left its mark on Secure Retirement after a reverse takeover by Southampton Football Club.

The shares finished the session 11 1/2p lower at 138p. A profits warning left Tele-Cine Cell Group nursing a fall of 13 1/2p at 40p.

Penny-stock Ransome stood out with a rise of 7 1/2p to 87p in response to a bullish trading statement.

The specialist engineer is hoping to live up to City expectations despite losses at two discontinued operations. Wistrust also responded to news of a profits increase at the halfway stage with a rise of 2p at 337 1/2p. A doubling of profits to £1.29 million in the first six months of the year at Dudley Jenkins was rewarded with a rise of 21p at 224p.

GILT-EDGED: Longer dated issues continued to outperform the short end of the market amid growing hopes that Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, will peg interest rates after Monday's modest rise in factory gate prices.

After a subdued start prices moved higher after publication of the latest unemployment and average earnings numbers. But the gains were never held.

The March series of the long gilt rose five ticks to £109 1/2 as a total of 77,000 contracts were completed.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 finished 1/4 better at £103 1/4, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was unchanged at £103 1/4.

NEW YORK: Profit-taking after Tuesday's rally and renewed softness in the bond market dragged down shares and by midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 43.49 points lower at 6,718.80.

and institutions swallowed the rationale that falling long-term interest rates made investment property look cheap. Unfortunately, rents failed to advance and the sector returned to the doldrums. Today, balance sheets are sound, rents are rising, and the reason to raise equity should be the need to finance a deal.

But good deals are thin on the ground. Like many industries, the property sector is not short of funds, but short of investment opportunities. The share prices of those few companies, such as Burford and Chelsfield, that have generated profitable deals are at premiums of more than 30 per cent to NAV.

But even the sluggish property majors, including Slough Estates, MEPC and Land Securities, boast shares near or above asset value. Such opportunities come rarely, and many will be tempted to ask for more.

Things have changed since the last price surge. In 1993, companies were repairing balance sheets damaged in the property crash of 1990-1992. Funds were needed to repay debt.

They were questioned by ethical investment researchers, but the big blow to Body Shop may be self-imposed.

A decade ago, the company had the air of a cottage industry gone wild. Its style was welcome in dreary high streets. But since then Body Shop have erupted like green trifles across the planet. Their uniformity suggests

the corporate strategy of the very multinationals that the company so loves to hate.

Add to that a unfortunate promotion by Anita Roddick of American Express cards and you are left with a retail concept that is anything but youthful. If there is no special reason to buy the products, there is certainly no reason to hold the shares.

Many companies are now plugging "natural" products similar to those pioneered by Body Shop. Yet the latter managed to differentiate itself with campaigns on the environment and business ethics. The company suffered when its credentials

in Asia like-for-like trading in the two weeks to January 4 fell 4 per cent, leaving Asia and continental Europe as Body Shop's worst markets.

THE depressing news from Body Shop yesterday was not another lecture about business ethics from Anita Roddick, nor even its poor sales growth in the Britain.

The bad news comes from the Far East. Body Shop has been flagging Asia as the growth market, but its trading figures suggest otherwise.

In Asia like-for-like trading in the two weeks to January 4 fell 4 per cent, leaving Asia and continental Europe as Body Shop's worst markets.

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MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 6718.80 (-43.49)
S&P Composite 765.66 (-1.32)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average Closed

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 13766.55 (-472.78)

Amsterdam:
ROE Index 661.67 (+3.04)

Sydney:
ASX 2638.2 (-11.8)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2988.45 (-39.57)

Singapore:
Straits 2221.15 (+5.63)

Brussels:
General 11101.85 (-78.65)

Paris:
CAC-40 2387.06 (-14.18)

Zurich:
SIX 857.80 (-1.48)

London:
FT 30 2781.3 (-23.5)

FT 100 4158.9 (-9.3)

FTSE Mid 250 4500.0 (-2.4)

FTSE 250 2263.3 (-3.4)

FTSE 100 2781.3 (-23.5)

FT All-Share 2000.16 (-2.4)

FT Non Financials 2002.6 (-5.4)

FT Financials 116.27 (+0.3)

FT Govt Secs 9432.0 (+0.22)

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TEMPUS

Unreal estate

COULD we be headed for a spate of rights issues from property companies? Share prices in the sector are racing ahead of net asset values (NAV), offering, in theory, an easy way to raise cash without diluting shareholders' funds. The FT property share index has risen 28 per cent over the past year, more than twice the rate of growth in the market as a whole. At £1866, the index should soon exceed its February 1994 peak of 1879. That share price boom, which took the index up 54 per cent, was occasioned by a flood of rights issues. And there must be some concern that companies will again take advantage of a buoyant share market to demand cash from investors.

Things have changed since the last price surge. In 1993, companies were repairing balance sheets damaged in the property crash of 1990-1992. Funds were needed to repay debt.

They were questioned by ethical investment researchers, but the big blow to Body Shop may be self-imposed.

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the corporate strategy of the very multinationals that the company so loves to hate.

Add to that a unfortunate promotion by Anita Roddick of American Express cards and you are left with a retail concept that is anything but youthful. If there is no special reason to buy the products, there is certainly no reason to hold the shares.

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and institutions swallowed the rationale that falling long-term interest rates made investment property look cheap. Unfortunately, rents failed to advance and the sector returned to the doldrums. Today, balance sheets are sound, rents are rising, and the reason to raise equity should be the need to finance a deal.

But good deals are thin on the ground. Like many industries, the property sector is not short of funds, but short of investment opportunities. The share prices of those few companies, such as Burford and Chelsfield, that have generated profitable deals are at premiums of more than 30 per cent to NAV.

But even the sluggish property majors, including Slough Estates, MEPC and Land Securities, boast shares near or above asset value. Such opportunities come rarely, and many will be tempted to ask for more.

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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Irish Budget pointers

ANOTHER Budget bungle after the *Daily Mirror's* leak. Two national dailies in the Irish Republic gave front-page coverage yesterday to a cabinet meeting on the 1997 package.

Unfortunately, anyone who read both papers would have been none the wiser as to what was actually agreed. The *Irish Times* surmised that Ruairi Quinn, Finance Minister, will tell a hushed Dail next Wednesday that the basic rate of income tax is to be cut from 27 to 26 per cent; he will propose no change in the top rate, currently 48 per cent.

Meanwhile, the *Irish Independent* said that ministers agreed to a 2 per cent cut in the basic rate and 1 per cent off the top rate.

DRINKS served to the water regulator at the Trade and Industry Select Committee yesterday were not entirely to his taste. Commenting on the bottle of House of Commons mineral water, Ian Byatt told MPs: "I drink tap water all the time."

Keegan card

WADDINGTON is as unguessed as Newcastle United fans after Kevin Keegan's departure. The games manufacturer has been forced to put plans on hold for the production of thousands of Squads games, which currently contain the Keegan card. The makers of Subbuteo were all set for a new production run in the game to feature the 1996 new signings, including Nigel Clough's return to Nottingham Forest. However, the advice from Waddington is to hold on to the Keegan card — chances are that they will become a collectors' item.

MORGAN GRENFELL

PENSIONS
SUSPENSIONS



Disney dress

BOSSSES at Disneyland are demanding a change of costume. They have banned their experiment to introduce casual attire for administrative employees at the Magic Kingdom. Dress down days are no more; casual loafers and sweaters are out, suits and ties (the "usher look") are back in. Frankie Walters, an image consultant for the Disneyland Resort said "business casual" turned out to be a poor fit for the tradition-bound operation.

Gold barred

TWO bars of gold dore missed their flight to England yesterday. The pair of 45 kilo bars, comprising 90 per cent gold, worth \$450,000 in total, were barred from boarding the plane from Malaysia to Heathrow, because their containers were too big. Instead, Jocelyn Waller, chief executive of Avoca Mining, will be awaiting their arrival at Royston this morning.

AFTER a joint by-line appeared on Tuesday, two City hacks at *The Independent* broke the news yesterday that they are turning their back on the newspaper world. Peter Rodgers, the paper's avuncular financial editor, who worked on both *The Guardian* and *The Sunday Times*, is off to work for the Bank of England. Meanwhile, Jill Treanor, who had only recently arrived, is to join Fleming.

MORAG PRESTON

Labour's utility levy is a fiscal confidence trick



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

people. In any given market, more are consumers. So consumers are the logical focus for political marketing folk. Their logical counterpart, the symbolic enemies of consumers, are "fat cat" directors.

In practice, as employees and investors can testify to their cost, executive directors are the only group immune from assaults made on utilities in the name of consumers. Just as the right-on BBC person said, few will sympathise with the "fat cat" bosses. There is a good reason, they lose nothing. Employees pay the price of regulatory or tax imposts. Once they can be squeezed no more, investors suffer, along with margins for error and thoughts of expansion. If consumer interests prove as short term as anything the City can offer, too bad.

Given that mind-set, there is little objection in principle to a windfall tax. If some industry or group of businesses makes a killing as a result of government action, with no extra effort by employees, investors or even "fat cat" directors, it is fair game to be tapped for a windfall contribution to the Government's (usually depleted) coffers. The Conservatives levied one promptly and carefully after banks profited from a sharp

rise in interest rates. They might have levied North Sea oil companies too, but the tax regime was supposed to do that anyway.

Labour's proposed utility monopolies levy does not appear to be a windfall tax, more a revenge pillage. Who knows? The details of this five-year-old scheme remain confidential, to avoid the criticisms of unfairness they are bound to evoke if trailed before the election. Instead, Labour merely claims to be reclaiming "excess profits" on behalf of taxpayers. How thoughtful. If that means anything, shareholders in British Gas and

British Telecom, still the biggest utilities, should have nothing to fear. Returns since privatisation have been below average. And it is hard to imagine that new Labour would search back in history for temporary "excess" profits made when Tony Blair was a unilateralist and Labour wanted to quit the Common Market. Regardless of a wider legal challenge, 1.7 million of us who still finance British Gas would surely appeal to the European Court of Human Rights against cruel and unusual punishment.

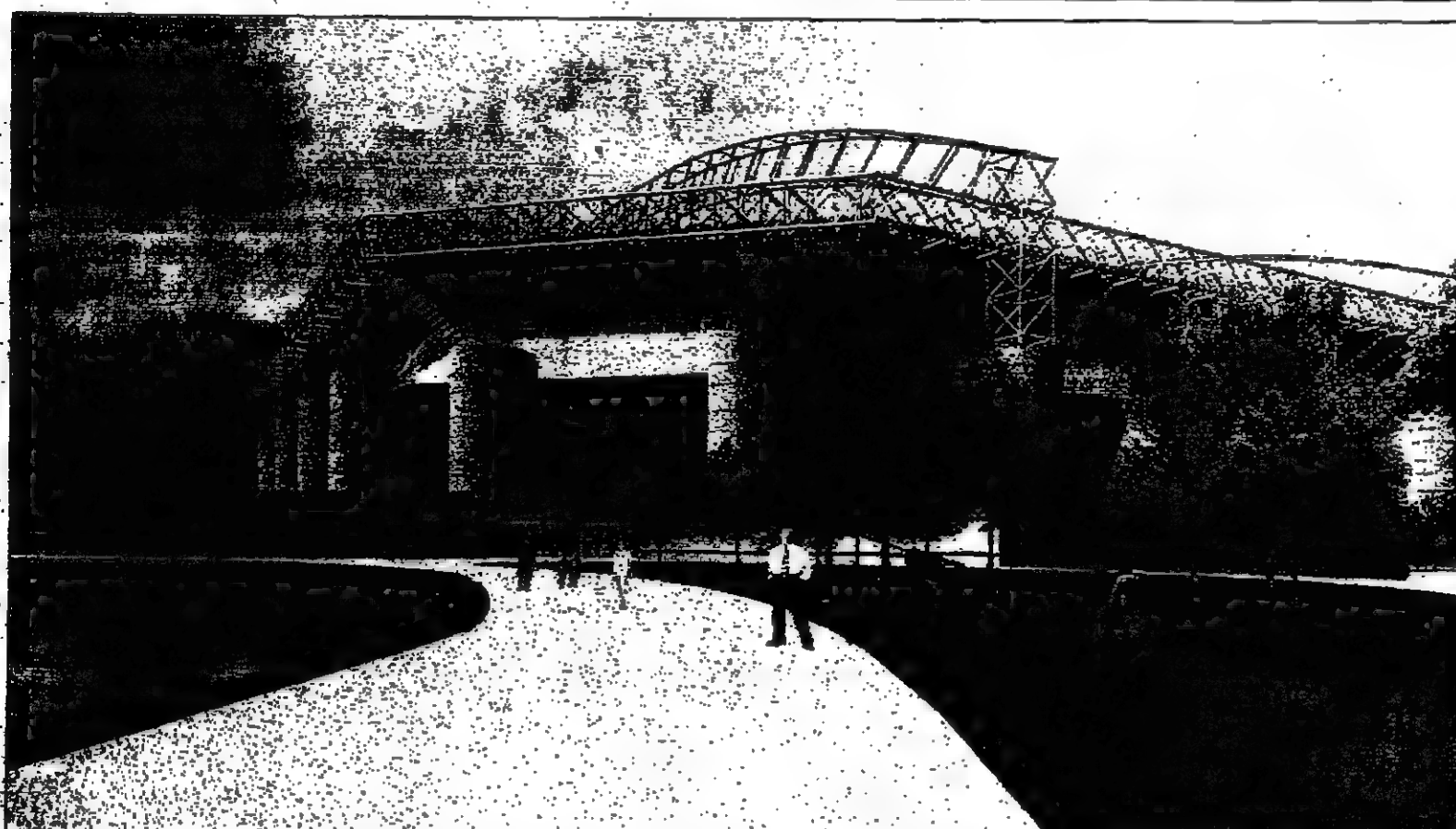
Not so most regional electricity and water monopolies. Investors in the distributors earned about £3.5 billion more profit than they expected because power demand was woefully underestimated in the prospectuses. They gained a similar sum when the National Grid, which they owned as a sort of low-profit co-operative, turned out to be a big profit centre under the new regime.

Both water and electricity companies gained unexpectedly from the RPI-X price formula when inflation fell sharply just after privatisation, though that was before the last general election. Once water and electricity firms were opened to takeover bids in 1995, investors reckoned they could

operate with far less risk-bearing share capital and far more debt than Whitehall or regulators thought prudent. Successful takeover bids for ten of the 12 Rees and two of ten water groups reflected this. Many boards, including those fighting takeovers, offered spare cash to shareholders in spectacular dollops, occasionally more than £500 million at a time. On a more modest scale, fund managers pressed several water companies to pay out unneeded capital, even though most had been saddled with extra obligations not expected at privatisation — expensive rainfall to mop up any windfall.

A windfall tax on Rees and most water companies would have been fair in 1992 or in 1995. Today it is just a fiscal alibi for Gordon Brown. The Shadow Chancellor has never said how much he plans to raise. His minders said it was £3 billion. Now they talk of £5 billion. By the first Brown Budget it could be £7 billion. The levy, supposedly one-off though really in instalments, is expending to cover whatever spending pledges Labour needs to make.

Mr Brown thinks he has found the ideal cash-raising instrument: a tax that does not really count as a tax. But he is wrong. The Tories got there first. Election after election, they financed tax cuts out of privatisation proceeds, or "asset sales", counting them as spurious cuts in public spending. This self-delusion contributed to the dubious public finances Mr Brown would inherit. But he would go one further, levying privatisation proceeds without selling anything at all. Even fewer would be fooled this time.



An artist's impression of the Castle Leazes stadium in Newcastle which is expected to cost the Premiership club £65 million and seat 55,000 fans

Sir John and the Castle fit for the faithful army

The monetary goalposts are forever moving in the race to develop stadiums, says Jason Nissé

Among the crowd of supporters gathered in shock around St James's Park last Wednesday, when Kevin Keegan's resignation as Newcastle United manager was announced, were a dozen or so environmental protesters. They held banners saying "Save the Moor" and "No building at Castle Leazes" in a protest to stop plans by The Toon, as the club is called in Newcastle, to put up a £65 million new stadium just a few hundred yards up the road from the club's existing home.

Sir John Hall, the property developer who has revitalised Newcastle, sees the building of the Castle Leazes stadium as the crowning achievement of his five years at the club. St James's Park sells out its 25,000 capacity every match, and the Toon army is expected to fill the 55,000-seat Castle Leazes with ease.

To pay for the stadium, Sir John is floating the club on the stock market. And to float the club, the issue of a manager who had twice threatened to resign became critical. In other words, Castle Leazes became bigger than Kevin Keegan.

Castle Leazes is just one of a whole flurry of stadiums which are being, have been or are about to be built in the UK. In the North East, both Middlesbrough and Sunderland, whose chairman is Bob Murray, have new stadiums. Derby County is moving from the Baseball Ground to a new home, and there is the McAlpine stadium in Huddersfield. Add to this the new national stadium in Cardiff and, of course, the redevelopment of Wembley.

Most top-flight football clubs have new stadiums, such as the North Bank at Arsenal, the new tier to the north stand at Old Trafford for Manchester United or the proposed redevelopment of Bramall Lane, Sheffield United's home. The total cost of stadium work in this country will exceed £1 billion during this decade.

But a burning issue is concentrating the minds of all the experts on stadium building. Why is Castle Leazes costing so much? New stands are reckoned to cost between £700 and £1,500 per person to build, depending on the amenities, such as catering, executive boxes and the like.

and on particular planning problems, such as access in the case of Arsenal.

New stadiums are less expensive. Sunderland's new ground will house 40,000 but is costing just £16.5 million. Middlesbrough paid £16 million for the Riverside stadium which houses 25,000, and the McAlpine cost £14.5 million for 20,000 seats. The only stadiums apparently costing as much per seat are the new Ajax ground in Amsterdam, costing £80 million for 50,000 seats, and the national stadium in Cardiff, which will have 75,000 seats at a cost of £90 million. But both have retractable roofs, an expensive luxury not needed for the hardy Geordies. The issue of the expense is something Newcastle's property director, Russell Jones, who happens to also work for Sir John Hall's Cameron Hall Developments, has

been reluctant to discuss in the run-up to the club's float.

Ernest Atherden, founder of Atherden & Fuller, architects, whose work includes Old Trafford and Liverpool's ground at Anfield, says the Taylor report into stadium safety, which followed the 1989 Hillsborough disaster, brought a sea change in stadium development. Lord Justice Taylor insisted on all-seater grounds, which pushed up the cost per person of the stands and ticket prices.

These costs are expected to rise further when new regulations about the safety of stadium design are agreed. Currently the rules say there must be a minimum of 610mm between seats — which is pretty cramped as anyone who has visited Wembley or Old Trafford, where the gap is close to the minimum, will

testify. Rod Sheard, chairman of the Lobb Partnership, which designed the McAlpine, the new Welsh national stadium and Highbury's North Bank, is on the committee working on the new norm and expects the new Central European Norm to be set at 750mm. "That is a reasonable minimum. We build 'to 800mm unless the client tells us otherwise."

The costs are also pushed up by the speed at which stadiums and stands have to be built. Clubs do not like to close parts of their ground while stands are being rebuilt. And if they are selling their old stadium for redevelopment — as Southampton and Sunderland are — they want to vacate the old site as soon as possible. Ballast Wiltshire cut its teeth on the redevelopment of St James's Park, where it built the Sir John Hall stand in just 21 weeks to be ready for the club's Premiership debut.

Dave Watson, chief executive of Ballast Wiltshire, admits the builder was under a great deal of pressure from Newcastle. "The Spurs situation [when the first match of the season was postponed because building work was not finished at White Hart Lane] is something everyone in the football industry was well aware of and wanted to avoid." As supporters have been forced to pay more they are expecting more amenities. "The days when you came to a ground, stood in the rain and had a pie and a pint for refreshment have all gone," says Mr Atherden.

Mr Sheard argues this provides a great opportunity for clubs. "If these extra amenities bring more than £50 per person per year in profit then the new development will pay for itself. The days when a stadium is a drain on its owners are long gone; now they are profit centres."

Clubs have been quick to spot the opportunities. At Manchester United the museum and Red Cafe bring in fans on non-match days and the restaurant at the Gallowgate end of St James's Park was recently listed in the *Good Food Guide*. They are also

looking at using the grounds for other sports, notably rugby. Until recently worries about churning up the pitch surface, as happened when Leeds United shared Elland Road with the Hunslet rugby league club, made ground-sharing difficult. But new grass technology is changing things — so that more than 100 matches of both football and rugby were played at the McAlpine last season without any problem.

The increased usage of the stadiums, and their place in the community, has brought a rethink of where they are sited. The fashion in the 1970s and 1980s, largely coming from the US, was for out-of-town stadiums with massive car parking. But this has backfired, with many of these stadiums becoming white elephants. The recent trend, worldwide, is to build stadiums in central locations, as in Melbourne and Wellington, New Zealand, where both cities looked at half a dozen sites for new stadiums and chose the ones nearest the centre of town.

Mr Watson says: "It is much better to have stadiums within the city, supported by good public transport. This is much more environmentally satisfactory." In other words the world is realising the British type of stadiums are the best. "The charm of the British stadium is that it is as much part of the community as the local pub, church or town hall," said Mr Sheard. Long may it continue.

City resumes the chase after deal over Hebron

Renewed stability could help to lure Israeli pics here, says Adam Jones

The deal between Binyamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat over the future of Hebron, the West Bank town, revives hopes for a less strained peace in Israel.

The stability it hints at is vital to Israel's international businesses and the British financiers hoping to woo them to London.

Traditionally Israeli companies looking for overseas capital went to Wall Street, even though the two-hour time difference between London and Tel Aviv gives Britain an advantage.

After John Major's visit to Israel in 1995, the City made a sustained attempt to become a serious alternative to New York.

It recognised the economic surge attending peace in the Middle East. This "swords to ploughshares" momentum was helped by massive immigration of skilled workers from the former Soviet Union. The result was a fast-developing economy with a disproportionate strength in hi-tech.

The first Israeli company to go for a London quote duly came from this sector. Dmatak, which joined the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) in December 1995, has adapted military technology for peacetime use. Its products include an electronic tagging system to keep prisoners under house arrest. The shares started at 75p and now languish at about 63p.

Five companies followed in 1996. SEA Multimedia, BATM Advance Communications, Selector, Geo Interactive and Pilot Technology all joined the AIM — enough for it to be dubbed the Alternative Israeli Market by some.

The companies have generally not enjoyed much of a welcome from London investors, who are more cautious about hi-tech than Wall Streeters.

One flotation that could have swayed committed Israeli-sceptics was a victim of spectacularly unfortunate timing. Last October Plasson, an injection-moulded plastics company and market leader owned by a kibbutz near Tel Aviv, was due to become the first Israeli listing on the main market.

However, four days before Plasson's flotation was due to close, a controversial tunnel project in Jerusa-

lem's Old City led to armed combat between Palestinian police and Israeli soldiers.

Plasson had raised £21 million, enough to proceed, but £7 million was withdrawn after the civil unrest.

The float had to be postponed. Now, Plasson is unlikely to reapproach the market and more than one UK company wants to buy a stake, providing the capital for international expansion originally sought from a listing.

The float's failure was a political embarrassment for Israel, provoking concern in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament. But it also threatened the City's campaign to woo Israeli companies away from their usual preference for New York.

After the clashes in October, a high-profile campaign to improve awareness of London's attractions in Israel was scaled down by one law firm involved in AIM floats. Even so, two of the six Israeli companies on the AIM joined after the disturbances. Geo Interactive and Pilot Technology made their debut in mid-October and December respectively.

Edgar Millar, of the Israel-Britain Business Council, says the disturbances had little effect, either on London's role as a source of capital for Israel or on joint ventures involving British companies.

He maintains the peace process will not be halted, despite recent volatility. "Serious businessmen who are interested in doing business in Israel don't let this sort of short-term tribulation bother them."

While a recent slowing of economic growth should improve the stock market in Israel, previously hampered by very high interest rates, Mr Millar says domestic listings will not replace the international hunt for capital.

With the Hebron deal concluded, the many Israeli companies still wanting to float on the AIM should face less suspicion about the country's political stability.

However, they will still have to overcome suspicions about the market itself. Some feel there are too many one-brick ponies or just plain weird stocks on the AIM. A hitch, foreign background may work against Israel's pioneer pics if the mood turns nasty.

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RJB wins approval for share buyback

By Oliver August

RJB MINING, the successor to British Coal in England, won shareholder approval yesterday to buy up to 5 per cent of its own shares. The move comes after a considerable share price decline in the wake of a profit downgrade by BZW, its brokers, last month.

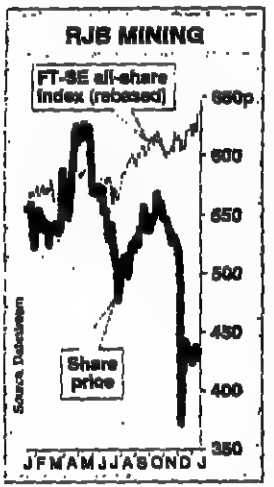
BZW predicted that Britain's largest independent coal producer would face an extremely difficult two years. RJB's buyback decision was aimed at countering the share price slide through an estimated 4 per cent increase in earnings per share.

But yesterday's move did not prevent a further slide in the share price, from 427.5p to 416.5p. Before the BZW downgrade the shares had stood at 485p.

The buyback will stretch to the limit the company's jurisdiction for buying back its shares after a 504 million repurchase last July. Companies may only buy a maximum of 10 per cent of their own shares in a full year.

The extraordinary meeting passed a resolution giving RJB the authority to purchase up to 8,560,000 ordinary shares.

RJB is facing further difficulties in two years when its contracts with electricity generators to buy British coal run out. Renegotiations are expected to be tough as price pressure has become more intense since the privatisation of the generators.



Mike Kershaw, right, chief executive of Stanley Leisure, and John Whittaker, who runs the racing division, promoting the new fixed-odds bet

Stanley Leisure eases lottery worries with 21% profits lift

By Alasdair Murray

STANLEY LEISURE gave notice yesterday that gaming companies are finally fighting back against the National Lottery when it unveiled a 21 per cent increase, to £7.4 million, in half-year profits — well above City expectations.

Leonard Steinberg, chairman, said that deregulation measures in the bookmaking and casino industries were helping to stimulate recovery.

The improvement came in spite of the company suffering a £2 million loss in profits from the record seven winners

ridden by the jockey, Frankie Dettori, at Ascot in the autumn.

Mr Steinberg added that trading had continued strongly since the end of the first half and that the company had only lost a small amount of turnover during the Christmas freeze. But he issued a note of caution about the potential impact of the introduction of the midweek lottery draw next month.

Mr Steinberg's positive comments, coupled with a 20 per cent rise in the interim dividend to 1.2p, helped shares to rise 21p, closing at 297.5p.

Overall turnover rose 28 per cent, to £210 million, with the company also bearing costs of £340,000 from the reorganisation of Gus Carter, which was acquired last June.

The bookmakers recently introduced the "49s" bet — a daily fixed-odds bet against a lottery draw — to continue the fight back against the lottery.

Mr Steinberg said that the new bet had made a "steady" start, although he added that the real test would come with the introduction of the midweek National Lottery draw.

Profits in the racing division rose by 43 per cent, to £4 million, with turnover increasing by 31 per cent, to £189 million, owing to the inclusion of Gus Carter. On a like-for-like basis turnover rose by 3 per cent.

Stanley said that the introduction of betting machines into bookmakers had been particularly successful, adding around £1.5 million to profits.

The casino division increased profits by 12 per cent, to £5.2 million, with an 8 per cent rise in turnover to £20.3 million. An increase in the number of amusement machines in casinos ensured a 65 per cent rise in machine takings. But the company gave warning that casino margins had been eroded as a result of customers becoming more knowledgeable about the games on offer and managing their money more effectively.

The interim dividend is payable on February 21.

Times, page 26

Bright future for fund managers, says study

By Our Business Staff

THE UK fund management industry, managing an estimated £2 trillion at the end of 1996, is well placed to enlarge its role as a leading global financial centre, a report from British Invisibles shows.

The privately sponsored body said the UK had strong international orientation, a skilled labour force and a liberal operating environment that would help British companies to gain from future developments in fund

management, "particularly in international markets where growth prospects look strongest".

The industry contributes £27 billion, or 0.4 per cent of GDP, to the UK economy and employs 35,000 people.

London ranks as the second largest city by value of domestic institutional equity portfolios, second only to Tokyo, with American funds spread across a number of centres.

Norwich names chief

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

NORWICH UNION, the mutual insurer preparing for flotation this summer, has announced that Richard Harvey, group finance director, will take over as chief executive at the end of the year when Allan Bridgewater, 60, retires.

In the interim, Mr Harvey has been appointed deputy group chief executive. He will continue his existing responsibilities as group finance director and appointed actuary.

The appointment clarifies the question of succession in

advance of the flotation. Philip Scott, 43, manager of NU's life and pensions division, was also considered to be in the running for the top job but currently remains as manager of NU's life and pensions division. He joined NU in 1976 and became general manager (finance) in 1992. He was responsible for overhauling NU after a number of general insurance and property market losses.

Mr Harvey, 46, was born in Birmingham and joined NU in 1992 as chief executive of its New Zealand operation. Prior to this he was chief executive of Sun Alliance's life subsidiary in New Zealand.

He returned to the UK in July 1993 and took on the additional role of appointed actuary in 1994. He joined the main NU board as a director in 1995 and is a fellow of the Institute of Actuaries.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

French await GEC move on Framatome

THE French Government is waiting for a reply from GEC to conditions for a merger of Framatome, which makes nuclear reactors, and GEC-Alsthom, the Anglo-French group, France's nuclear industry minister, said yesterday. M. Borotra said the Government had laid down five conditions. Two of these were that the French Government would have control over any strategic decisions concerning nuclear matters, and the continuation of co-operation between France and Germany over a future EPR reactor.

The other three conditions were the maintenance of Framatome's nuclear activities with a separate identity, a predominant role for French capital in the business, and the "clear identification of provisions for nuclear risk". GEC and Alcatel-Alsthom each owns half of GEC-Alsthom. Alcatel-Alsthom also owns 44 per cent of Framatome, in which French state bodies hold a controlling interest.

Lufthansa warning

GERMANY'S Federal Cartel Office has given Lufthansa, the national airline, a warning over the fares it charges on the key Berlin-Frankfurt route. A spokeswoman for the cartel office said it would require the airline to reduce its fares on the route to equivalent journeys. Lufthansa rejected the criticism and queried the legal standing of the office's warning. The airline argues that the fares it charges on this route do not cover its costs, and so cannot be viewed as excessive.

Denby sales higher

DENBY GROUP, the tableware company, enjoyed a 15 per cent rise in sales in the first three months of the current financial year. At the company's annual meeting yesterday shareholders were told the UK tableware market remained subdued and Denby sought further growth in exports. Sales to America and Japan were performing well and solid progress was being achieved in Germany. Denby shares rose 7p to 277.5p yesterday.

Benson restores payout

BENSON GROUP, the manufacturer of environmental controls, has restored the interim dividend to 0.5p a share after a turnaround in continuing operations to profits of £845,000 before tax and exceptional items in the half year to November 30 from a loss of £559,000 previously. Pre-tax losses were reduced to £719,000 from £3.54 million after a £1.5 million charge against the disposal of two subsidiaries. Adjusted earnings were 2.7p a share (3.9p loss).

OMI in American deal

OMI International, the UK engineering solutions company, is to acquire Redkoh Industries, a privately owned environmental control company based in New Jersey, for \$1.6 million in cash and shares. Redkoh claims 14 per cent of the world preprocessor control market. The business earned pre-tax profits of \$87,000 in the year to March 31. The vendor is being paid \$800,000 in cash and two million OMI shares, which will be retained until at least January 5, 1998.

Russian consultancy

PRICE WATERHOUSE is creating the largest management consultancy in Russia by combining various existing practices. The London firm, the first foreign consultancy to be granted a Soviet licence in 1990, will be employing 300 information technology specialists and said that LVS, one of its new acquisitions, was a "leading technology and systems integration consulting business with a management team that is among the top in Russia".

Fred conversion has way to go

David Haigh finds benefits and shortcomings in the soon-to-be reshaped standard on goodwill

THE Accounting Standards Board will shortly convert its Financial Reporting Exposure Draft 12 (Fred 12), *Goodwill and intangible assets*, into a new accounting standard. It is rumoured that the International Accounting Standards Committee will alter Exposure Draft 50 to fall into line with the ASB.

The new ASB standard will replace Statement of Standard Accounting Practice 22, which permits fundamentally different accounting treatments for intangible assets. At present, some companies write off goodwill straight to reserves, some capitalise and amortise them over periods of up to 40 years, while others capitalise them and simply review carrying values annually.

The latitude offered by SSAP 22 has created difficulty in comparing UK accounts.

In future, writing off acquisition "goodwill" straight to reserves will be banned. This practice avoids the need for annual amortisation charges in the profit and loss account and therefore flattens earnings per share. However, immediate write-off also reduces shareholders' reserves, sometimes dramatically. WPP, the

marketing services conglomerate, originally opted for immediate write-off when it acquired JWT and O&M, but subsequently capitalised its brand names. WPP's reserves would currently stand at minus £400 million if it had not changed its accounting treatment.

WPP's dilemma typifies the problems of heavily branded businesses built through acquisition. If GrandMet wrote off the £3.8 billion of acquired brands in its balance sheet it would eliminate shareholders' reserves.

In future, all companies will have to capitalise acquired intangibles in a consistent manner. It will be necessary to identify individual intangible assets, including brands, then set them up separately in the balance sheet. It will, however, be possible to avoid amortisation charges by arguing that the brands in question have indefinite lives. This will probably be the practice among most of the companies with brands currently in balance sheets. Those companies which restate past acquisitions will most likely only do so for brands that meet this test. The carrying value of such brands will have to be confirmed by



David Haigh says the measures do not go far enough

means of an annual discounted cashflow analysis of the relevant "income generating unit". This should pose few difficulties.

Unfortunately, there are several glaring omissions from Fred 12. There is no provision for the revaluation of acquired brands nor for the

inclusion of internally generated brands in the balance sheet; this conflicts with both UK and international conceptual accounting frameworks. Nor is there a requirement for revaluations or internally generated brand values to be reported anywhere else in financial statements. So while

More seriously there are no comprehensive guidelines on disclosure requirements for capitalised brands. The justifiable criticism that brand valuations are volatile would be significantly mitigated if more information were disclosed on assumptions.

Finally, the rules for independent valuation are dangerously vague. This creates the opportunity for fudges and conflicts of interest. Given the materiality of capitalised brands, the issues of disclosure and independent valuation need rapid clarification.

This is not simply an academic debate — the ultimate issue is the effect on share prices. There is evidence that disclosure of brand values enhances share prices. The point is that markets are not perfect and analysts are not all skilled in the business of DCF valuation.

The real reason for putting brands in balance sheets is to explain hidden value. Even with the new standards we are still only halfway there.

David Haigh is a chartered accountant and managing director of Brand Finance.

A welcome shove in the right direction

SMALL accounting firms see themselves as an endangered species. They see the world closing in around them. They can no longer afford to train their own staff. The tide of deregulation is removing any monopoly work they may have had. And, of course, they believe their professional bodies are in thrall to the largest, rather than smallest, firms.

Very little of this is true. But facts are never allowed to get in the way of a good whinge. And they are not going to like the latest idea floated by the Department of Trade and Industry. It has suggested that deregulation needs to go further. For the past two years businesses with a turnover between £90,000 and £350,000 have been allowed to skip the full audit and opt for an audit exemption, which means that a report of their financial progress and standing is produced but is not assessed or certified by the auditor.

Now the DTI suggests that this should be scrapped as well. This would mean that most small companies would have no legal need to employ an accountant. That does not mean that accountants immediately lose, all their business. Any company that has a keen view of the future, and has an accountant, will continue the relationship. And the shrinking of the old audit requirement obscures the fact that most small companies employ an accountant primarily to sort out their tax rather than worry about audits.

The DTI has a point. The audit exemption reports introduced in the last bout of deregulation have been a mixed blessing. Research published last week by the Scots ICA shows that their status is widely misunderstood. And Ken Wild, technical partner at Deloitte & Touche, has argued that they are "bizarre in that, in spite of being time-consuming, they do not require the accountants to support the entries in the accounting records or the estimate or the judgments made by the directors in preparing the accounts". His verdict: "The sooner they disappear the better".

His views are supported by some of the Scots research. David Wood, ICA assistant director, accounting and audit, said that the main concern was that "users may not really understand the distinction between an audit report and an audit exemption report and may be placing unwarranted reliance on the latter". The research bears this out.

Users of accounts were worried that businesses using the audit exemption route were not getting a thorough test of their systems and other argued that banks and other lenders are likely to be sceptical about the audit exemption route gave no independent checks and generally lacked reliability. And they complained about the possibility of generally declining standards without the presence of the regulation of a full audit.

A third of accountants said that banks may be unhappy about businesses opting for exemption reports. But, as cynics might say, they would, wouldn't they. Small accountancy firms are not going to give their full support to something that removes some of their easier, routine and less taxing work.

It is a difficult issue to judge. Users of accounts want some sort of independent assurance. The businesses themselves find that their first desire is to get pedantic auditors off their premises, but that their second is to provide enough evidence to lenders that their business deserves as much if not more support. The accountants are loath to see good business evaporate.

And the research suggests another worry. As Wood puts it: "Taking all small companies out of the audit requirement could result in the majority of small and medium-sized accounting practices no longer performing audits." The result, he thinks, would be "further consolidation". "Audit services and training might become concentrated in only the largest firms and cities, with the service being completely removed from their smaller counterparts," he suggested.

And here we come to the essence of the concerns. Taking businesses out of the audit net makes sense. It is something which, like the recent proposals for removing the need for small companies to comply with full accounting standards, is unarguable.

But, at the same time, accounting firms have to be uneasy about any diminution of their market. A generation of accountants in their late forties and early fifties learnt their skills doing small audits... of spotting very quickly whether accounts look right or wrong. But this ignores the fact that deregulation will force small accounting firms either to enhance their advisory abilities or go out of business. That is where the choice lies. Deregulation is just the welcome shove in the right direction.



ROBERT BRUCE

Seconds out in borrowing bout

CHANTREY VELLACOTT has come up with a great new variant on the old game of calculating the day of the year when taxpayers start earning money for themselves rather than for the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It has calculated the average borrowings-per-second figure that the Government needs to achieve to qualify for the European single currency. Ac-

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

According to partner Maurice Fitzpatrick, the average needs to be £740 per second or below to qualify.

The Treasury forecast for borrowing works out at £725 a second, which means that the United Kingdom would get in. But the OECD has estimated that the United Kingdom's borrowing figure will be £860 a second. This figure means that we lose out. Chantrey

Vellacott is very sensibly hedging its bets.

Language barrier

IF YOU thought UK accountants had problems, spare a thought for the Canadians. Or, to be more precise, the accountants in Quebec. A survey shows that English-speaking accountants in the province earn nearly \$20,000 a year more on average

than their French-speaking colleagues. No one seems able to explain this. The survey said that English-speakers were generally older, and that could have an effect. No one has calculated what being bilingual does to the salaries.

Tables turn

THE word in the marketplace is that the profession has mis-

calculated again. Through the recession, accounting firms cut back on staff. Now that business is booming, there is a desperate shortage. And firms are having to resort to every possible measure to make newly qualified accountants happy when it was but a few years ago that they could not sack enough of them. There is an irony in the announcement that Price Waterhouse is offering extra prize money to any of its students doing especially well in their exams. It is better than the PwS they used to hand out.

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Source: FT Information

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RENT AVAILABLE TO ANYONE AGED 18 OR OVER SUBJECT TO STATUS A GUARANTEE MAY BE REQUIRED WITHIN 10 DAYS OF RENTAL



■ FILM 1

Tinseltown at its most sentimental, but at least Whitney Houston sings in *The Preacher's Wife*.



■ FILM 2

Lions, African adventurers and imperialism, as *The Ghost and the Darkness* serves up pretentious action.

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ FILM 3

The underpowered *Picture Bride* depicts the life of a Japanese teenage wife in rural Hawaii.



■ FILM 4

Rarely-heard Shostakovich music is the centrepiece of the intriguing *Rothschild's Violin*.

CINEMA: Even its star duo can't add sparkle to the creaking remake of an old Cary Grant vehicle, says Geoff Brown

A queasy Christmas leftover

Just when you have safely put away the paraphernalia of Christmas, out come the reindeer, the fairy lights, the nativity play, and the far dollops of Hollywood schmaltz. *The Preacher's Wife* was released on December 20 in the States; watching it now is like eating cold leftovers from someone else's Christmas dinner.

It is doubtful, though, if the film could ever have made a nourishing meal, even with the glamorous star-coupling of Denzel Washington and Whitney Houston as an appeaser. True, Houston sings; she goes back to her roots and sings gospel, too. But she also has to follow a plot that forces her to fall under the spell of an angel called Dudley, sent from heaven to help her husband, an inner-city Baptist minister crowded with troubles. True, Denzel Washington looks a picture in nativity

The Preacher's Wife
Odeon West End, U, 124 mins
Appealing stars, antiquated whimsy
The Ghost and the Darkness
Empire, 15, 110 mins
Ponderous African adventure
Walking and Talking
Virgin Haymarket, 15, 86 mins
Pleasant if flimsy New York comedy
Picture Bride
Curzon Phoenix, 12, 90 mins
Timid goings-on in Hawaii

threads coloured white and grey; but he, poor man, plays the angel, one who lacks wings but boasts a handshake described as "kind of like springtime and another's home cooking all rolled into one".

The last time this queasy plot was served up was a world ago, in 1947. The film was then 20 minutes shorter and called *The Bishop's Wife*, the title of the source material by the fanciful novelist Robert Nathan. The angel was played by the twinkling Cary Grant, the troubled bishop was David Niven, while the wife was Loretta Young — a poor gospel singer, no doubt, but a great one for quivering her large dewy eyes.

Intuiting though it now appears, the original film at least smacks of its period. *The Preacher's Wife*, turgidly directed by Penny Marshall, appears lost in limbo. No liquor store robberies or indiscreet plugs for computer software can shake the film into modern times. It also creeps with contrivances big and small, from Houston's reluctance to sing at a nightclub — what else is the lady in the film for? — to the "cute" close-up of a cross-eyed kid beaming behind specs in the church's Christmas festivities.

Luckily, Houston and Washington always look agreeable together, whether skating, dancing, or beaming quietly with Christian charity. But neither spends much time seriously acting. The hard stuff is left to Courtney B. Vance. Against the odds he lends dignity and genuine feeling to the Baptist preacher Reverend Henry Biggs, who darts about in an orange-lined parka, struggling to keep church,



Good news: In *The Preacher's Wife* Whitney Houston sings gospel. Bad news: she also has to follow a plot that has her falling under the spell of an angel sent to help her husband

community and his marriage together: the one human figure in a film populated by puppets.

After that Tinseltown whimsy, *The Ghost and the Darkness* whisks us off to Africa at the end of the 19th century for an unduly ponderous action drama with intellectual trimmings. A true story lies in wait. "Even the most impossible parts of this story really happened," the narrator says proudly.

The impossible parts, I suppose, are the activities of the two lions, known locally as the Ghost and the Darkness. These cunning and ferocious beasts chew up quantities of the workforce at Tsavo, East Africa, who are helping the British to build a railway that would secure their control of the ivory trade. In fact the lions are easy to take compared to Michael Douglas's hunter Remington, who rides into view from the American South, with a cocked revolver, shaggy, greying hair, and a lazy excuse for a performance. The lions I believe, Douglas I don't.

Remington arrives to solve what Tom Wilkinson's railroad boss dismisses as "a few minor difficulties with the local wildlife". Val Kilmer, lightly equipped with an Irish accent, plays the engineer John Patterson, who has failed to stop the beasts in their tracks. After some mutual sparring the two join forces, striding into the dimly-lit bush to face the lions' roar, and the whoops and shrieks of an orchestral score by Jerry Goldsmith.

Along the way, William Goldman's script provides the characters with philosophical reflections on evil, and the gulf between man and nature. Relieved of the task of directing junk like *Blown Away*, Stephen Hopkins basks in the film's serious side. Unfortunately, there is not enough here to grip a thoughtful audience for long, while the crowds who expect escapism get a small ration of popular thrills.

Not enough happens. When something does, the Oscar-winning cameraman Vilmos Zsigmond can-

oulares it in fancy dark brown hues. More damagingly, the details of the setting soon fade, leaving the space to be occupied by two stars far from home, and a lot of Hollywood hot air.

With *Walking and Talking*, frisky and flimsy, American cinema returns to familiar territory: the upscale New York of Woody Allen and the more polite independent movie-makers, where characters shuttle between apartments and coffee shops, cinemas and therapists, analysing their lives, walking and talking. The novelty of Nicole Holofcener's debut feature lies in its female perspective on friendship, commitment and the Manhattan merry-go-round.

Amelia and Laura have been best friends since high school. Now the former room-mates are at the crossroads. For Laura (Anne Heche), a trainee therapist, marriage lies ahead. For Amelia (Catherine Keen-

er), nothing looms except a desperate dalliance with a videorecorder employee whose idea of a date movie is *Freak Show 7*. Other characters causing complications include Laura's fiancé, Amelia's ex-boyfriend, and a cat with cancer.

Not that we spend much quality time with any of them. Holofcener, a graduate of Columbia University's film school, favours very brief scenes that may catch the scramble of people's lives, but keep the treatment superficial. Yet along with hasty or redundant moments, Holofcener crafts scenes that fleetingly catch a mood or an experience: Amelia's doleful date with the video guy (amusingly played by Kevin Corrigan); or Laura's jitters over a mole on her fiancé's chest.

Holofcener's cast certainly respond well to a script peppered with funny lines; and both Keener and Heche prove particularly adept at squeezing a kaleidoscope of feelings into a tiny space. One looks forward to the director's next film, when she

will hopefully give her script ballast and her characters time to grow.

In *Picture Bride*, an Asian-American venture made in 1993, the bride is a 17-year-old girl from Yokohama, who through an exchange of photographs is given in marriage in 1918 to a sugar-cane worker in Hawaii. Expectations are not fulfilled. The husband is far older than his own photo indicated: the plantation work is hard, and home is a hovel. Kayo Hatta's timorous film leaves its own expectations unfulfilled. Interesting material about Hawaii's immigrant mix is touched on, but not developed. One tiny scene is replaced by another; nothing builds. The visual beauties never exceeding conventional shots of skies and landscapes. Youki Kudoh, familiar in the West as the punk Japanese girl in *Mystery Train*, is decent enough as the bride who perseveres through her disappointments; but all told, this is the kind of exasperatingly genteel film that you just want to throttle.

SNAP
VERDICT

'May induce nausea'

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

THE PREACHER'S WIFE
Jasmeet Anand, 20: This broad remake of *The Bishop's Wife* ends up becoming a showcase for Whitney Houston. Although she sings wonderfully, the acting is shallow and over-sentimentality seems to be the order of the day. Susan Wallace, 19: Some unfortunate scriptwriter has yet again been tortured into finding another way to fit a whole Whitney album into a film. Heartwarming, but may induce bouts of nausea. Sonia Noronha, 20: Not as entertaining as I expected. The film seemed to have been designed simply to demonstrate Whitney's vocal talent. Reena Kotecha, 19: This lacks a strong, original plot, with the storyline of an angel sent from heaven to save the day being used once again. The uplifting gospel singing is perhaps the only redeeming feature of the film.

THE GHOST AND THE DARKNESS

Jasmeet: This film has only two good points: the stunning scenery and the photography. Although Val Kilmer is superb playing the strong, silent type, the sporadic Irish accent is off-putting. All in all, it fails to make an impact.

Susan: Somewhat more grisly than *The Lion King*: not for the faint-hearted. Endless close-ups of angry lions eventually lose their impact through repetition. Distinctly average.

Sonia: The stunning backdrop to this film really brought Africa to life, making it well worth seeing. The scenes of lion terror will leave viewers on the edge of their seats. Reena: Packed with action and adventure. The splendour of the African scenery is filmed with finesse and adds to the attraction of the film.

WALKING AND TALKING
Jasmeet: An original plot with some extremely strange characters. The film moved along well and kept me laughing. Although not on general release, search this one out.

Susan: This drily humorous film flowed very naturally. The relatively unknown cast was excellent.

Sonia: Filled with emotion and humour. Reena: A must-see for young adults.

Shostakovich in focus

A long-suppressed operatic work of art bearing the stamp of Shostakovich, which has not been staged anywhere in the world for almost 30 years, has received its world premiere in Paris — in a film version.

But *Rothschild's Violin* (currently playing at Le 14 Juillet Beaubourg cinema) is more than just a film of a little-known opera. It tells the fascinating story that lies behind the work, and blends music, drama, singing and historical fact into an inspiring whole. The pity is that no British distributor has snapped it up yet.

Adapted from a short story by Anton Chekhov, the opera began to be composed shortly before the Second World War by the Jewish Soviet musician, Benjamin Fleischmann. In 1941 he met his death during the defence of Leningrad and it was his music, master, Dmitri Shostakovich, who completed the composition and did the orchestration.

An opera by the Russian master is currently showing in Paris — on film

performed — in 1966 — only to be banned the following day.

The opera evokes the now vanished world of the *shetel*, a tightly-knit Jewish community. The film is shot in shimmering, bright colours, and the participants assume the expressive lyricism of the silent cinema. The story is that of a man trying to atone for his sins by an act of generosity.

Bronza is a bitter and materialistic violinist and coffin maker in a village of elderly people who never seem to die. On the demise of his long-suffering wife he is suddenly confronted with the emptiness of his life and, in a spontaneous gesture, gives his treasured violin to the village's poorest boy, whom he had frequently insulted. The boy, who has never played the fiddle before, starts to play melodies that have never been heard before.

Newsreel footage (some very

seen before) of spectacular, patriotic Stalinist processions and fanatical Nazi rallies are interspersed into the narrative, which has the tension of a good detective story. Actors portray the principal figures in the drama with conviction and authority.

The opera itself is the centrepiece of the film. It is a beautiful yet powerful work, with rousing crescendos and quieter, gender passages. The music is both joyful and sad, melancholic and uplifting, perfectly recreating the world of a lost paradise.

Ironically, the film was produced in France and shot in the Russian language by Edgardo Cozarinsky, a filmmaker of Argentinian origin, in the very countries that had originally banned the work. It features Sergei Leiferkus and other distinguished Russian opera singers, with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Gennadi Rozdestvensky.

The final words of this little gem are spoken by Shostakovich himself, who says: "Too many of our people have been killed and nobody knows where they are buried. Who can erect a monument to their memory? Only music can do that." And, may one suggest, film as well.

LAURENCE GREEN

RADIO: Peter Barnard on a network with a niche How 2 now fits to a T

Radio 2 has spent a difficult few years with the flustered appearance of a party guest who has turned up at the wrong address but takes several hours to realise his mistake. Now, however, it has found the right front door and is looking more comfortable by the week.

The perception that Radio 2 had gone to pot was always a mite exaggerated, but this is the most difficult of the BBC networks to place in a permanent niche. Radios 1, 3 and 4 have audiences whose tastes and age, by and large, are unchanging. Radio 2's audience is more fluid: a combination of people who have grown out of Radio 1 but would rather not admit it, and people who never really liked Radio 1 but have even more being described as middle of the road.

One of the better clues to how a network sees its appeal is in programme titles. If the name of a personality appears in the title, it is a reasonable assumption that the network believes that name is sufficient to attract the audience it is seeking. Consider therefore the titles of four consecu-



Saturday night slot for the middle-aged Bryan Ferry

tive programmes on Saturday evening: Arthur Smith's *Amusing Bits*, Bassey's *Birthday Bash*, Bryan Ferry, *The Ella Fitzgerald Songbook*.

Smith and Ferry are middle-aged. Bassey is 60 (hence the birthday bash) and Fitzgerald recently died. Smith, originally a so-called alterna-

tive, is now more or less mainstream; Ferry is from the rock era wistfully remembered as intelligent.

Bassey and Fitzgerald, though vastly different, probably share a great many fans. But what this scheduling

illustrates above all is that Radio 2 is now a class act rather than something from the supporting bill. Now everything has a purpose.

Audience research figures next month will make interesting reading in respect of Radio 2. The last ones, relating to the third quarter of 1996, show an audience share among all radio stations of 12.3 per cent for the network, up from 11.8 per cent a year earlier. That means around 8.5 million people a week tune in. They are getting good value from a station that has at last found its way.

Musical banquet for the old ham

CONCERT

OAE/Manze
Queen Elizabeth Hall

OUR days know nothing of hype compared with those of Arcangelo Corelli. To prove the point, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment constructed an evening of musical extravagance and sycophancy as an "armonico tributo" to that "virtuosissimo di violino" of the 17th century.

First we were to hear what caused all the fuss: for this perfecter of the concerto grosso was seen as a musical Messiah, spreading the gospel of a new musical language for the forthcoming century. His "furious lanchings (sic) out into puzzles" and his bizarre behaviour in performance caused comment: violinist Andrew Manze, directing the OAE from his leader's chair, was doubtless wise to turn an expressive back to his audience.

Manze's own eyeballs were surely rolling during the scrunching suspensions of the slow movement of Corelli's Sonata a quattro in G minor for strings as, not content with every passing dissonance, the composer would constantly change key. The introductory overture to an oratorio written for one fawning cardinal to honour another was a sober affair by comparison.

The trumpet was, in Corelli's day, an angelic melodist of an instrument, although his writing for it in the Sonata a quattro in D major was the very devil for the contemporary natural trumpet to play, as Mark Bennett discovered. Bennett returned for a Sonata by Stradella and for the Trumpet Sonata in D by Corelli's contemporary, Torelli.

In both these works the strings of the OAE produced some of the most imaginative and subtly refined playing I have heard from them this season. Soloists such as co-leader Alison Bury and cellist Susan Sheppard came into their own in that supreme piece of musical hype, Geminiani's orchestration of Corelli's violin sonata, *La Follia*, exploiting every trick of the time and of the trade throughout its encyclopaedia of Baroque variations.

HILARY FINCH



CHOICE 1

Julian Bream
celebrates 50
years of guitar
virtuosity

VENUE: Tonight at the
Queen Elizabeth Hall



CHOICE 2

**First night for
Clare Bayley's
generational
play, The Shift**

VENUE: Opens tonight
at the Young Vic Studio

THE TIMES
ARTS

CHOICE 3

Katie Mitchell
takes the RSC into
medieval drama
with *The Mysteries*

VENUE: Previews at the
Other Place, Stratford

NEW VIDEOS

Thrills and spills
as *Mission:
Impossible*
blasts its
action-packed way
to the small screen

Caution: explosives on board

NEW ON VIDEO

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE

CIC, PG, 1996

OUTRAGEOUS set pieces dominate this enjoyable revival of the television series about the impossible exploits of special agents. Tom Cruise is wasted as the action hero, but all the actors play second fiddle to the explosions, collisions and director Brian De Palma's skill in twisting an audience round his finger. A very mixed supporting cast includes Jon Voight, Vanessa Redgrave (scene-stealing with ease) and poor Emmanuelle Béart, who seems afraid that her dialogue will bite her. Available to rent.

THE TRUTH ABOUT CATS & DOGS

Fox Guild, 15, 1996

SHORT, dark and dumpy Jameane Garofalo, a veterinarian by trade, gets tall, blonde and lissom Uma Thurman to be her stand-in for a romance with Ben Chaplin. Michael Lehmann's romantic comedy springs no real surprises: you can trace the wooing-proxy theme back to *Cyrano de Bergerac*. But there is plenty of pleasant humour, and you can understand Chaplin's appeal to American audiences as he stands, curly-headed, pitching his lines with gawky charm and an array of London vowels. Available to rent.

THE END OF ST PETERSBURG

Tartan, PG, 1927

COMMISSIONED for the tenth anniversary of the Soviet Revolution.

Pudovkin's classic presents the events through the heroic eyes of a newly arrived peasant. Pudovkin's images lack some of the boldness of Eisenstein's, but it is impossible not to be impressed and moved by the use of symbolism and montage, and the march of history. The video uses the soundtrack added to the film in 1967 by Frédéric Rossif.

LOVE HAPPY

4 Front, U, 1942

THE LAST film to feature the Marx Brothers as a trio was first conceived as a solo vehicle for Harpo, who plays guardian angel and dogbody to a troupe of impoverished actors. Chico and Groucho then crept into the script, along with a young Marilyn Monroe. The plot is unrelenting — there are gangsters eager to retrieve stolen diamonds located in a sardine tin. Some of the jokes are unpalatable too. All told, decidedly odd.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

4 Front, U, 1942

MOST of the comedies directed by Ernst Lubitsch took place in gilded settings, but in this wartime entertainment he took his droll sense of fun to the theatre in Warsaw occupied by the Nazis. Contemporary critics complained about bad taste; but distance lends enchantment to the boisterous burlesque and to Carole Lombard's and Jack Benny's witty performances as narcissistic hams outwitting the Gestapo. This was Lombard's last performance before her death in a plane crash.

GEOFF BROWN



Making a splash: Tom Cruise in the all-action *Mission: Impossible*

NEW CLASSICAL CDs: Making virtuoso play with Beethoven; the tenors of their times

CHAMBER

Hilary Finch

BEETHOVEN

Violin, Dances, Bagatelles

Olli Mustonen

Decca 452 206-2★ ★★ £15.49

IF YOU had never associated Paddy Whack with Beethoven, it would probably be the Finnish pianist Olli Mustonen to point out the connection. He dances into the new year with these sets of fanciful variations and dances which we too often overlook. They arose out of Beethoven's skill as improviser and keyboard virtuoso and, since Mustonen is often mischievously accused of composing

and recomposing even as he plays, he is ideally suited to performing them.

His fingers drum and dart their way through the *Variazioni on Six National Airs - Paddy Whack* and a cool *Last Rose of Summer* among them.

— and then gives the lie to the so-called *Six Easy Variations* in six prismatic minutes of audacity. He goes at seven frisky *Ländler* and six *Eccossaises* with a will, while the self-contained variations of the C major Rondo and the E flat Minuet show how Mustonen can be winsome and unpredictable without ever seeming merely mannered. His *Six Bagatelles* give longer pause for more serious thought and, in the 12 variations on a minuet from the

ballet *Le Nozze di Figaro*, he proceeds to choreograph each one as if for a particularly supple-jointed and naughty marionette theatre.

John Higgins

THE THREE ORIGINAL TENORS

EMI 7243 5 6253 2 9

3 CD ★ ★ ★ £19.99

THE catchpenny title conceals the repackaging of three admi-

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345-023 498

table 1980s compilations by EMI. A disc apiece goes to Caruso, Gigli and Björling, each captured in his prime.

Caruso was only 29 when, in 1902, he recorded ten arias in a Milan hotel room. All are included. "The session was inspired by his performance in Franchetti's *Gianni Schicchi* at La Scala, two items from which were on the agenda.

The opera is forgotten, but it thus helped to establish Caruso's name beyond the theatre. In an afternoon, he changed the face of the embryo gramophone industry. The other dozen tracks come from the next two years and include *Leoncavallo* and *Cilea* accompanying their own works.

Gigli had the longest career of the three. Most of his disc

dates from the early 1930s, when he had just turned 40. But EMI was wise to put in two items from 1921: the sextet from *Lucia* and the quartet from *Rigoletto*. Here Gigli is joined by the likes of Galli-Curci, De Luca and Pina.

The Björling tracks were made in Sweden between 1936 and 1942, when Nils Grellius sometimes provided routine accompaniment. Björling at least sings his French arias (Meyerbeer excepted) in French, which the others never deigned to do.

An excellent taste of three of the century's greatest tenors for those starting a collection.

★ Worth hearing

★★ Worth considering

★★★ Worth buying

LONDON

JULIAN BREAM. The virtuoso guitarist celebrates the 50th anniversary of his professional debut at the age of 14. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, SE1 (0171-960 4242) Tonight, 7.45pm.

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. Post-Jo Shostakovich and composer Stephen Montague have collaborated to produce this year's RTI Celebration Series commission. The Creatures Indians, on the theme of animals and their characters. LSO, Royal Albert Hall, London, WC2 (0171-639 8382) Tonight, 7.30pm.

THE SHIFT. Andy Laverdure's production uses state-of-the-art technology for Clare Bayley's exploration of crime in the lives of three women in 1947, 1968 and 1997. Young Vic Studio, The Cur, SE1 (0171-529 6333). Opens tonight, 7.45pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm. Until February 1.

VIVALDI AND BACH BY CHAMBERLIGHT. The London Ensemble of London interprets a programme of music by Vivaldi and Bach's

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Murray

Brandenburg Concerto No 5. Air on a G String, and Canon by Pachelbel. St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London WC2 (0171-639 8382) Tonight, 7.30pm.

ELSEWHERE

BOLTON. The 1987 season opens with the regional premiere of Philip Ridley's dark and alarming comedy *The Potholes*. Potholes, 7.30pm.

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OPERA & BALLET

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ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

TONY 7.3



■ VISUAL ART

St Ives celebrates one of its most talented painters: Christopher Wood, who died in 1930 at the age of 29



■ THEATRE

Blink and you miss it: the Mime Festival serves up a show lasting just five minutes

THE TIMES
ARTS



■ JAZZ

A well-meant tribute to the late Ella Fitzgerald only intermittently comes to life



■ TOMORROW

Why the BBC is going crazy this weekend for the music of an avant-garde Polish composer

Postcards from Cornwall

Isabel Carlisle on the brief life and Surreal art of Christopher Wood, influenced alike by opium and St Ives

The Tate Gallery St Ives has just rearranged itself for the fourth time in its short life. Like the Tate Gallery in London, the works on show change every year, with the Cornish gallery concentrating on the work of the St Ives school of painters who first settled in this little fishing village between the wars. It is a narrow brief, perhaps too narrow to sustain in the long term, although this year's display achieves a coherence around a central theme that was lacking in some previous years.

There is a feeling of doors ajar into other worlds

The new focus is the painter Christopher Wood, and in particular his scenes of Cornwall and its French equivalent, Cornouaille in Brittany. The first gallery places Wood in the context of artists working either side of 1925, when he was first achieving recognition: Georges Braque, Ivon Hitchens, Ben Nicholson, Henry Moore and Alfred Wallis among others. Immediately after Wood himself comes a room that links Britain to European postwar art — the School of Paris and the CoBrA group.

Wood died in 1930 at the age of 29, with his myth already fully formed. He was a friend, probably lover, of Jean Cocteau, who encouraged his use of opium. He had been befriended also by Picasso and the poet Max Jacob, had worked for Diaghilev, had been the darling of Parisian high society and travelled

widely. In this country it was he and Ben Nicholson together who in 1928 spotted the paintings of the retired sailor Alfred Wallis through an open door in St Ives, an event which is credited with a profound effect on the British modern movement. Wallis's direct, naive vision entered directly into the work of both artists.

Nicholson later progressed into abstraction. Wood's suicide posed the question of the direction his early promise might have taken, had he possessed the moral courage to fight his opium addiction and overcome the emotional and legal problems of being a homosexual in England at that time. Although his unresolved potential must be an issue for an exhibition of Wood's works, it is addressed only obliquely here.

The scenes of Breton and Cornish life — the small compact buildings, the narrow streets, the working people, the fishing boats and the sea — were an uncomplicated refuge for Wood. The works that emerged are unremarkable but troubling, absorbing and then breathing out a faint whiff of Wood's depressive tendencies and opium-induced hallucinations. Many were painted with great speed from picture postcards in what, with hindsight, was a last dash to establish a reputation far removed from Paris.

Wood's letter of 1928 to Winifred Nicholson from St Ives makes it



Loading the Boat, St Ives (1926): "The small buildings, the narrow streets, the working people, the fishing boats and the sea were an uncomplicated refuge for Wood"

tempting to see him as little more than a recording eye. "Each day there is a new thrill here: wonderful sunshine, terrific storms — each thing is at its best, for this is a picture gallery of only the good pictures, and one feels its good quality so much that one hardly wants to seek another." Seen en masse, however, there is a powerful

feeling in Wood's work of doors ajar into other, foreign, artistic worlds. That Wood opened up new ways of seeing and possibilities of depiction has to be seen as part of his claim to lasting recognition. The element of strangeness is palpable in *Sleeping Fisherman*, *Ploar, Brittany*. The semi-naked figure on the beach, lying by a

basket of mackerel, looks huge against the church and little houses in the background. He could be some mythical hero swept up out of the sea. The rapid brushstrokes, especially in the sky, suggest a nervous expectancy. Nor is the portrait of Max Jacob of a figure in repose: he, too, is poised on the edge of action.

The chalky colours and classical solidity of *The New Boat*, *Treboul or The Fisherman's Farewell* suggest Italian fresco painting, while *The Jumping Boy*, *Arandel* hints at the kind of Surrealism developed later by the English artist Leonora Carrington, who worked closely with Max Ernst. Two powerfully surreal works. *The Yellow Man*

and *Zebra and Parachute*, both painted in the year of Wood's death, are not in this show. It is most likely that, by temperament at least, Surrealism was the route along which Wood might have found his true artistic voice. Christopher Wood, a painter between two Cornwalls is at Tate Gallery St Ives until April 20

Brief encounter

THE London International Mime Festival brings many curiosities our way. I cherish the evening I sat in a striped pavilion erected within the ICA, put on the silver wig that identified me as Haydn and read some words in praise of Mozart, who played us a little light music before handing round cups of chocolate.

But inside that pavilion there were about 30 of us. At the BAC, the performance by young Frenchman Ezechiel Garcia-Romeu takes place within a tent only large enough for one person at a time, and it lasts five minutes. Was that five minutes you said, Mr Kingstom? From the moment his audience of one begins staring into a miniature theatre to the moment when its black curtain falls again, yes, five minutes.

What we see there is M Garcia-Romeu's hands, one of which articulates a glove puppet, though calling this elaborately carved item a puppet is

Le Marotoscope
BAC, SW11

akin to saying that Michelangelo's *David* and Tracy's garden gnome are both statues. A ghostly figure, on whose tiny face a lifetime's sorrows seem to be etched, takes his place at a table, dips his quill, writes, discards. The gestures of discontent are exquisitely lifelike and what happens would have appealed to Samuel Beckett, master of the bleakly brief effect.

The experience is so pure that the dross of life seems blown away. As for Marot: a poet of that name wrote the first French sonnet 500 years ago, so perhaps it is he we have glimpsed, trying to write the second.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Anthropomorbidity

WHEN Stephen Mottram was a boy, Jeremy Kingston writes, he watched crayfish being caught, cooked and eaten, and wondered how the meal would have looked if the crayfish had been human in shape. This quirky perception, and Richard Dawkins's notion that living forms exist so as to carry DNA forward, are influences behind the "dream-like glimpses into the lives of small, crunchy people" that make up Mottram's 60-minute marionette show.

"Although his invention begins peering away near the end, he creates a haunting, fascinating and even (in the opening scenes) distressing world where human creatures are pursued for the valuable seeds they contain. His creatures are made of wood: stings are tied to bits of metal protruding beside their joints, and Mottram makes no attempt to hide the hand that

The Seed Carriers
ICA

holds them: but he knows precisely how to make them crawl, hop, walk, frantically wriggle when caught, beat their arms against imprisonment and find themselves powerless against death.

On to a round stage, like a monster grindstone, they trot with just those movements of wooden limb that would signal, were they to be alive, hope, curiosity, caution and terror. What makes the sight so agitating is that Mottram's are the hands guiding them, and his the hands that catch them in a net and bash their heads against a wall. His artistry is formidable, like his imagination. I have never before seen the certainties of marionettes combined so insistently with dread.

JAZZ: A tribute to Ella Fitzgerald; new directions for an enduring partnership; and rebirth of a singer-songwriter

Ella sung to the power of three

Ella Fitzgerald
Songbook
Pizza On The Park

IF YOU are going to mount a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, the complete singer, it makes sense to have three voices at your disposal. Barbara Jay, Maxine Daniels and Tina May, the triumvirate diving into Ella's life and career, cover an admirable amount of musical ground in their guided tour. But a clumsy script and some awkward transitional passages ensure that, as it stands, the show amounts to rather less than the sum of its parts. Since May has only recently joined the line-up, replacing Rosemary Squires, the proceedings should soon flow more smoothly.

Part of the problem, of course, is that Fitzgerald was such an elusive personality, hidden behind the flawless enunciation and the impeccable timing. Jay, Daniels and May offer plenty of showbiz patter and the sketchiest of biographical outlines, preferring to concentrate on the music. Opening with the pre-war nursery rhyme *A Tisket A Tasket*, they move quickly on to the "songbook" albums that Fitzgerald recorded for the Verve label. You're *The Top* functioned as a genial duet for Jay and the new member of the trio, Cole

Porter's arch list-song augmented with a wry reference to "Madonna's salary". April in Paris provided a graceful solo feature for Daniels, with Tommy Whittle's quartet purring at her heels as she segued into *Lullaby of Birdland*. Jay and Daniels, veterans in this field, were both at home with the unforced swing tempos. May, a more self-consciously virtuosic (and occasionally laboured) singer, gave us more of Ella the stratospheric stylist.

The barren patch that Fitzgerald encountered in the Sixties after leaving Verve was reflected in the incongruous choice of *Can't Buy Me Love*, energetically delivered by all three singers. Given that Fitzgerald recorded so many titles by Antonio Carlos Jobim, it seemed a pity to roll out *The Girl From Ipanema* yet again, although May's treatment made an ebullient change of gear into a brisk 4/4 beat halfway through.

CLIVE DAVIS

LIKE any fruitful long-term relationship, the musical partnership between saxophonist Andy Sheppard and keyboard player Steve Lodder has demanded a certain amount of flexibility from each, but the results, from their initial recorded collaboration on Sheppard's 1989 album *Introductions in the Dark* onward, have been impressive. One of Lodder's great strengths is his necessarily self-effacing skill as an accompanist, but with their latest project, the quartet *Moving Image*, there are

Moving Image
Ronnie Scott's

signs that his hitherto undersung talents for composition and improvised soloing are being given their due.

The band, fleshed out by bassist Dudley Phillips and drummer Mark Mondesir, derive their name from the fact that their core repertoire (the material making up their recent eponymous album) was composed by Lodder and Sheppard for various film and TV projects. Live, however, it is clear that the freedom and space granted by a flexible rhythm section to both front-line players is at least as important as the quartet's roots in this relatively restricting medium.

Setting out their stall with a lively opener, *Rubberneck*

Deep in a new groove

ing, the hand soon settled — courtesy chiefly of a vigorous burst of tenor-drums interplay pitting all Mondesir's tumbling energy against the controlled bluster of Sheppard — into an informal but disciplined groove. Sheppard switched to sopra-

no for the heart of the set, but it was his rapport with Lodder which sparked the band.

Lodder's soloing, whether on piano or synthesiser, is always both mellifluous and energetically inventive, but it is his almost uncanny ability to select precisely the right

keyboard timbre and texture to set off the overall group sound that marks him out as a master. On the evidence of this gig, *Moving Image* should provide another rewarding outlet for the Sheppard-Lodder team that trades under the misleading name Shaddy Music Inc.

CHRIS PARKER

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CHANGING TIMES

Moonlight and
Pastoral in 1
Tempest in 2



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POWER, POLITICS AND PROSE: A PRE-INAUGURAL LOOK AT AMERICA IN PRINT

Truths no longer self-evident

Max Beloff examines claims of America's decline

No topic could be of greater importance than the role the United States has played in world politics over the past half century, the subject of Professor White's massive tome, nor can anyone anywhere fail to be interested in an analysis of the decline in America's cultural and educational standards, so painfully reminiscent of our own plight in these islands, which is the subject of the rather bizarre collection of essays collected under the title *Dumbing Down*—an expression apparently current in the United States.

Professor White has set himself to explain why the apparent American domination of the world scene politically, militarily, economically and even culturally in the years immediately after the victories of 1945 has given way to a situation where the United States finds itself no more than a single player on the world stage, and, except in the narrowly military sense, very much on the defensive. Had his frame of reference not concluded with the initiation of the Gulf War and had he been able to take into account the setbacks to American policy in relation to Bosnia, the Gulf, Somalia and the Africa of the Great Lakes, he might have had to exclude the military aspect as well.

The relative decline of American power and influence over these years, despite the collapse of the only serious rival for super-power status—the Soviet Union—is now a new theme and has exercised the minds not only of historians such as Paul Kennedy but of some of the participants in these events, notably Henry Kissinger. But Professor White has an approach to the problem which is at least original.

For him what matters is the country's relations with the rest of the world is not the measurable relations of power, nor the ability of statesmen to take the right decisions, but the governing myths of the time. At the end of the Second World War, the United States was in a position to choose between two such myths, one a perpetuation of its temporary hegemony through military power, the other the acceptance of "cosmopolitan internationalism", that is to say the merging of American strength into the operations of international institutions to the benefit of the world community as a whole. It was an ideology espoused by Henry Wallace and by the more constructive critics of the later New Left.

The wrong choice was made by President Truman and Dean Acheson and their supporters in the establishment "consensus". The country embarked on a programme of military expenditure, using up resources that could otherwise have been spent on tackling domestic problems, spanning the world in a series of alliances as part of the containment of Soviet communism, regarded as the sole threat to the well-being of the United States. All ended in tears with the Vietnam War, which revealed that another more powerful emotion—Third World nationalism—presented an alternative challenge to American hegemony. First the war itself and then defeat challenged the national consensus, and produced a

THE AMERICAN CENTURY
The Rise and Decline of the United States as a World Power
By Donald W. White
Yale, £25
ISBN 0 300 05721 0

DUMBING DOWN
Essays on the Strip Mining of American Culture
Edited by Katharine Washburn and John F. Thornton
Norton, £17.95
ISBN 0 393 03829 7

country more divided internally than at any period of its post-Civil War history. The Reagan presidency was a throwback to the era of the domination of policy by the "military industrial complex" and was only saved from ignominy by the concurrent but not consequential decline in the direct Soviet threat.

Since Professor White gives precedence to "myths" or ideas, he is consistent in his choice of sources. Actual events are of little interest. Treaties and diplomatic documents are not analysed, and the disposition of United States forces and civilian missions not given more than perfunctory consideration. Apart from the dicta of Presidents and Secretaries of State the book is almost wholly based on the American press, including in particular the weekly and monthly magazines which are seen to be the best reflection of what ordinary Americans thought.

Professor White's approach suffers from two obvious weaknesses. Relations between any single country, even a major one, and the rest of the world are not the product of "myths", but of a series of decisions taken from time to time by the country's authorities. These decisions are made and executed by men, and not by "myths". One needs to understand the internal process through which decision makers come to hold their positions, the experience and training they have acquired en route and the institutions through which they have to work. It is a long time since Tocqueville asked the key question—are the institutions of the United States, so favourable to its internal prosperity, suited to manage relations with foreign countries?

Since Professor White dismisses the wider claims of the New Left that some kind of conspiracy was at work, it is all the more incumbent upon him to look at the "imperial presidency", at Congress and at the political parties, before assuming that one can offer any plausible explanation of the course of events. Communist insurgency in Malaysia was defeated while its counterpart in Vietnam was successful—does that not suggest some investigation into military doctrines and political analysis is of equal importance to hegemonic myths?

The second and even greater weakness of this work, and one which gives a new meaning to "neo-isolationism" derives from the fact that a country's foreign policy cannot be divorced from its context. Not merely does White not try to see the United States through the eyes of non-Americans—for his views on what this image may be he



America the beautiful? Eric Drooker illustrates Allen Ginsburg's *Illuminated Poems* (Turnaround, £12.99)

relies wholly on the reporting of American journalists—but he does not even attempt to assess the outlook and expectations of America's principal foreign interlocutors. In an enormous bibliography of some 400 authors, only some half dozen are non-Americans, and most of these expatriates.

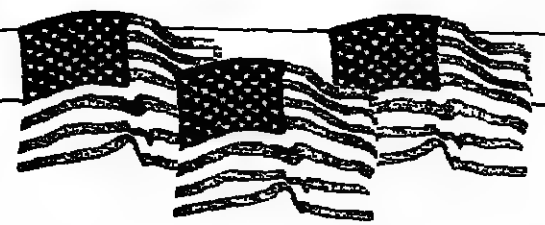
Given the significance of the Cold War, some understanding of the Soviet Union is surely a prerequisite for judging United States policy. Professor White maintains that had the United States been willing to "internationalise" the Marshall Plan, the Soviet Union would have been prepared to fall in with the idea and peacefully become part of a single international community. Such a claim involves interpreting Soviet as well as American "myths" in a radical new way. Even the historical revisionists to whom Professor White gives more credence than is their due do not normally go that far.

If Russia is remote, what about Western Europe? Here Professor White is no less at sea. He repeats with some relish his view that Britain is a country in decline with no

hope other than tagging along with the successful economies of its continental neighbours. One can either agree or disagree with this conventional American view. But when he goes on to claim that the European Union already conducts a single foreign policy and is thus another great power, one can only wonder what he knows of current issues. An aspiration perhaps, but not reality.

Dumbing Down gives some of the answers—up to a point—inadvertently. What is clear from all the evidence on the educational side is that most Americans are being brought up like Professor White to believe that America is all they need know about—the simplest facts about the geography and history, let alone the beliefs and cultures of the rest of the world, hardly figure, despite talk of "multiculturalism". No wonder science and the arts have a hard time. Professor White wants not *The American Century* but the "Century of the Common Man"—a very common man, one fears.

Lord Beloff's *Britain and The European Union* is published by Macmillan, priced £14.99.



Where the sun don't shine

Peter Stothard

MY FAVOURITE WAR
By Christopher John Farley
Granita Books, £8.99
ISBN 1 85307 002 4

Thurgood Brinkman is a successful Washingtonian black male who is not quite successful enough. He is a journalist but not on *The Washington Post*; he is an Ivy League graduate whose contemporaries are already top television producers or fashionable Prozac novelists. He wants to be a Hemingway or a Raymond Carver but instead he writes "trend features" for the *National Now!*, a paper bearing certain similarities to America's only mass-market national daily, *USA Today*.

The year is 1991 and the biggest black success in Washington is General Luther Pinpoint, a figure bearing equally certain similarities to General Colin Powell. It seems for a while as though the Gulf War is going to give Thurgood his big break. Just when "the youthful emerald of his salad days was becoming an ugly jealous green" he gets the chance to go to Dahran with Sojourner Truth Zapader, the *Post's* star female black columnist.

He first jibes at the idea of being Ms Zapader's assistant and researcher: "How come it's always the black man who's asked to take two steps down to take a step up?" But then he contemplates his part in the post-one-night-stand pregnancy of his sister's boyfriend's sister. His white housemates, led by a self-styled presidential speech-writer, have run up massive bills and left him with the landlady. And then there is his *National Now!* job. "Imagine a coughing, wheezing wino with a mucus-filled nose, open skin sores and syphilis. Now imagine this man is 33 stories tall. Now imagine crawling into this man's urethra every morning at 9am and reporting to work in his colon. Now you know what it's like working at *National Now!*"

So Thurgood goes to war, where he has none of the luck of the usual post-Scoop fictional misfits. He "exchanges United States imprisonment in a Saudi hotel room for Iraqi imprisonment in a Baghdad hotel room and never manages to file a story. The only advantage he gains

during the birth of George Bush's New World Order is that his successful contemporaries sink back to his own low level of achievement. After a brush with a friendly landmine our hero is flown back home to find the *National Now!*'s door closed and that the only available job for him is on a suburban ad-sheet called the *Fall's Church Squatter*.

My Favourite War is frequently a funny book and only occasionally a silly one. Its mockery of literary pretensions is amusing even in the passages where the author is trying to be a bit of an intellectual himself. For those of us who spent the Gulf War in Washington, Farley evokes the crazy-seriousness of those days, the means by which the media were mobilised behind the American forces and the fundamental forces and the fundamental forces of America's capital.

It is a journalist's novel—satirical, episodic and sketched characterised—which is also about journalists. Reporters fight over scarce computer screens. John Rawls meets John Lennon on the information superhighway. Feature writers try vainly to turn some triviality that happened to the Editor into a style story for the zeitgeist.

In the same way it is a novel of and about the young, black American middle class. Thurgood's parents had sweating white kids to mow their lawn. They gave their kids "none of that I'm pathological, you're pathological, we-all-know-how-the-cagebird-sings bullshit that the media loves to see in black families". However low Thurgood's writing career goes, he knows that his mother will always have his application forms ready for law school.



Farley: scooped

Programmed to self-destruct

Marianne Wiggins

THE LAST THING HE WANTED
By Joan Didion
Fleming, £15.99
ISBN 0 00 224080 7

JOAN DIDION established a place among her generation of American writers with her debut novel *River Run*, published in 1963. From the start, hers was a voice as distinctive as any of the male proto-styles who followed in her wake in England a decade later. Every seven years or so, through the Seventies and Eighties, she produced another novel, cut from the same dark fabric along the same tight lines. But during those years, too, she kept writing unsentimental edge-of-social-commentary while her peers from the Sixties, notably Norman Mailer, laminated their political calling cards to slip in the back of their fiction.



Didion: unsentimental

Didion has always been in a fug with her native material, bullying it like an Apache dancer—but she's never abandoned it. The homes she always tries to run away from are suburban Californian or, as she puts it, sitting in some other "forlorn tropical zone" on the American horizon. Her characters are notably short-fused ciphers whose only definition is in self-destruction. Even before the absurd vulgarity of Reagan's Un-California

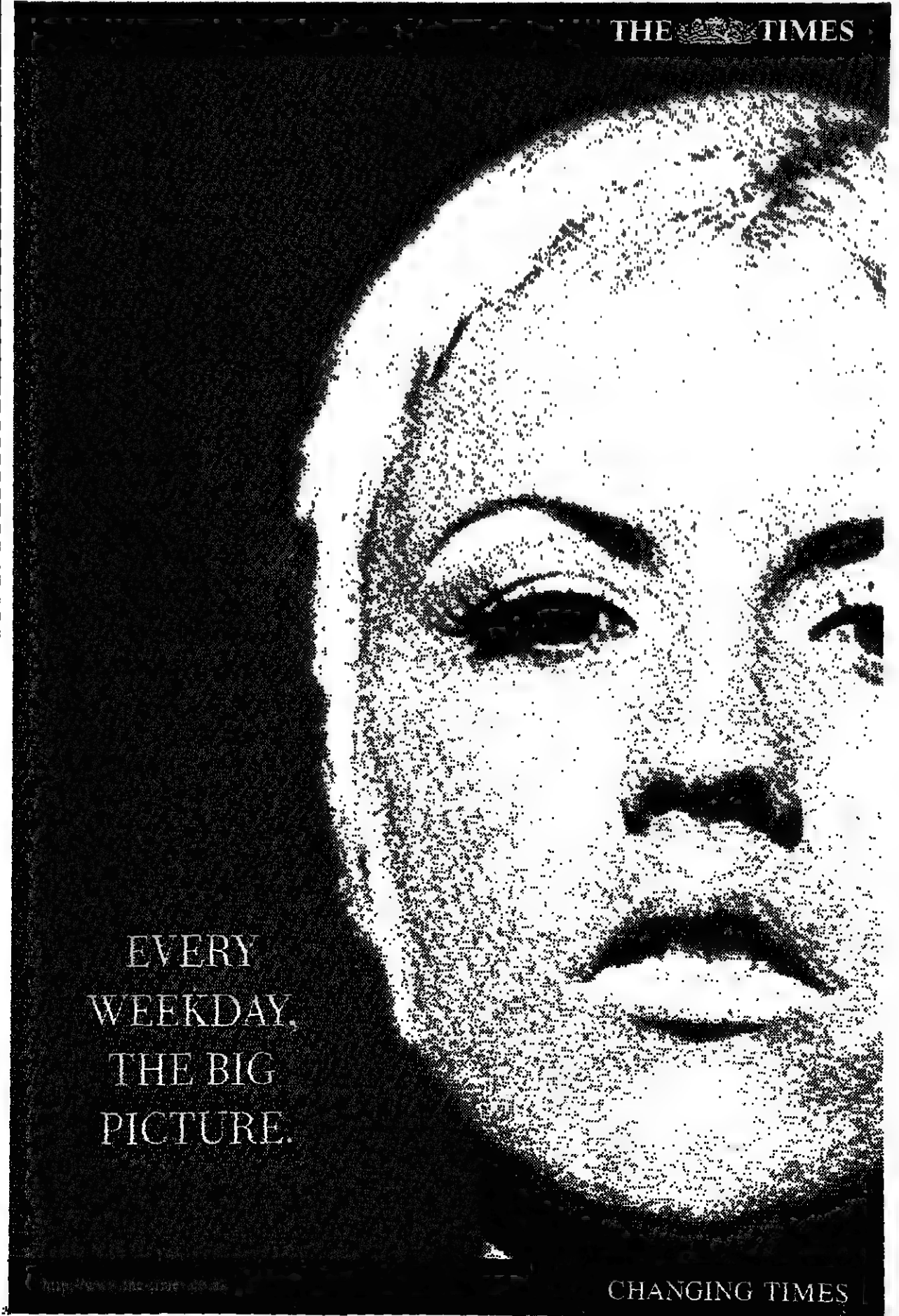
nian presidency, it was inevitable that Didion's political bite would infect her fiction. And now in *The Last Thing He Wanted* it fully and finally has.

Regardless of what she names them, I always call Didion's heroines Renée, from the song *Just Walk Away, Renée*, because that's what they do. And, symbolic of the unreality she sees in modern American life, the first thing a Didion woman does is walk into a life not her own and began to live it, a casual and careless casualty.

This one's called Elena, and the year is 1984. The place is somewhere south of Florida in "our lake", as one United States Government character calls the Caribbean. What is going on is the illegal, but unofficially sanctioned, arming of the Contras. The front man on the supply line is Dick McMahon, Elena's 70-year-old father. When he suffers a heart attack, Elena walks into the role—until, with her newfound lover, she self-destructs.

"It is hard now to call up the particular luridry of 1984," Didion writes, "the counterfeit machismo of it... Many people appear to have chosen during this period to identify themselves as something other than what they were... This was a period during which many people appear to have known that the way to fly undetected over foreign coastlines was with cash, to buy a window."

As in all of Didion's novels, all the people who "appear to have known" are men—men "who could pick up the telephone and affect the Dow." Conversely, what Didion's heroines do is affect an emptiness at the centre into which everything fatally drains. Yes, she gives us much the same novel each time. Yes, she is unimpaired. But this is her tireless genius: while the others abandon the field, she keeps watch. Her novels accuse the movers and shakers. You are killing my women, they say. You are killing yourselves. And you are draining our nation.



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CHANGING TIMES

Bargains of the week — from a four-day shopping spree in Toronto to cookery classes on a Greek island

HOLIDAYS

STANFORD Skiing has a luxury chalet in Argentiére with views of Mont Blanc available from this Sunday and next from £299 a person self-drive, £440 with flight. Accommodation also available in Megève next week. Details: 0171 242074.

SKIING in the French Alps for a week from £89 a person, based on four sharing self-catering accommodation, with a flight from Gatwick on Saturday is the cheapest of many late availability deals from First Choice Ski this weekend. Details: 0990 557755.

FUERTEVENTURA for £169 a person for a fortnight's self-catering with a flight from Gatwick next Tuesday is on offer from Page & Moy. Details: 0116 2507116.

TORONTO for a four-day shopping spree from Bales Tours with Saturday departures from Heathrow starting on January 25. First-class bed and breakfast accommodation and city tour included. Details: 01306 876867.

CYPRUS is available for £145 a person for a fortnight's self-catering with a flight from Gatwick on January 25 from Portland Direct. Details: 0990 002200.

INDIAN tours at a 10 per cent discount are available in February from Cox & Kings, with prices starting at £1,255 for a fortnight's Splendours of the East tour, and a 16-day Rural Rajasthan trip. Flights, bed and breakfast accommodation and sightseeing included. Details: 0171 873 5000.

SOUTH AFRICAN trips are on special offer in February and March from Virgin Holidays with six nights in Cape Town, car hire and return flights costing from £819 a person, and a similar deal in Durban from £939. Child discounts available. Details: 01293 617181.

THREE nights for the price of two are available from many Bruges hotels featured in the Belgian City Breaks brochure, with prices starting from £96 a person including ferry crossing, and from £105 by Eurostar. Details: 01992 456156.

COOKERY courses in Greece at a saving of £100 if booked by the end of the month are available from Candilli. The discounted cost is £550 a person and includes full-board accommodation on an estate on Evia, excursions to and from Athens but not flights to Greece. Details: 01580 766595.

FLIGHTS

BRITISH Airways has a £59 return sale on most domestic routes when you book 14 days ahead and include a Saturday night stay. Routes covered include those between London and Aberdeen, Belfast, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Jersey, Manchester and Newcastle. Details: 0345 222111.

MEMBERS of American Airlines frequent flyer scheme can now earn points on all British Midland flights. Details: 0181 572 5555.

PASSENGERS flying Debonair from Luton (the airline serves Rome, Barcelona, Madrid, Copenhagen, Düsseldorf and Munich) can take along a companion for £50. Details: 0500 146200.

BOOK before February 15 and a Virgin Mega Saver to Boston, New York or Washington DC costs £179. Details: 01293 747747.

AIR UK from London City to Rotterdam or Edinburgh costs £49 return provided you stay away for two nights. Details: 0345 666777.

RYANAIR has a Friends Fly Free deal between the UK and Ireland. One passenger pays from £99 return, with companions flying free. Details: 0541 569569.



Peak practice: admire stunning views of Mont Blanc from a luxury chalet in the ski resort of Argentiére

PERMITS

LE SHUTTLE has yet to publish summer fares but has prices available until March 31. Day trips cost £59, a five-day return £69, and a standard return £129. Bookable through Eurodrive. Details: 0181 324 4000.

NORSE Irish Ferries has special offers on its Belfast-Liverpool route. Foot passengers can take a day return for £59, £69 for a three-day return or £99 (single fare) for a car and up to four passengers. Details: 01232 779090.

SEA France has revised fares to £89 return for standard crossings to February 28 for a car and four passengers (£95 for up to eight passengers). The fare drops to £75 for Sunday-Thursday travel (£3 per extra passenger). Details: 0990 717171.

STENA Line is selling five-day returns for a car and up to four passengers on Harwich-Hook of Holland for £94 until May 17 (night crossings, £154). A standard return costs £176 (£240). Details: 0990 707070.

WIGHTLINK Ferries has fares starting from £30 return on Portsmouth-Fishbourne until March 26 (excluding March 23-24). Bookable through Eurodrive. Details: 0181 324 4000.

HOTELS

DISCOUNTS of up to 30 per cent are offered by Hilton International as part of its Winter World of Savings promotion at 135 hotels worldwide until the end of February. The special rates are available seven days a week, and upgrades can be obtained for a small supplement. Prices per room per night start from £61 on the Continent and £56 in the UK. Details: 0800 856 8000.

THE Birmingham Grand Moat House offers discounted rates at the Tamworth Snowdome, an indoor skiing slope, for guests staying two nights until March. Price is £98 per person half-board during the week, and £106 at weekends. Details: 0800 123221.

FREE mobile phone hire is available for guests staying at the Grosvenor House Hotel in central London from this week, although insurance is charged at £1.75 a day. Details: 0171 499 6363.

SHERATON is offering a two-night golfing package at its Excelior and Des Bains luxury hotels in Venice from March 15 until May 31. Rates, including green fees and transportation to and from the golf club, are from £225 for a single room and £330 double. Details: 0800 353535.

A POULTRY and seasonal game masterclass is being held on February 20 at Hunstrete House Hotel, near Bath, under the guidance of head chef Robert Clayton. Cost is £62 for the afternoon, while rooms are £95 a night single or £120 for two people sharing. Details: 01761 490490.

LEADING Hotels Of The World has launched a free brochure, Great Affordables, which details non-peak special offers at 159 of its hotels. Details: 0800 181123.

SPEND Valentine's night at Woodlands Park Hotel, Cobham, Surrey, where Lillie Langtry reportedly had regular trysts with Edward, Prince of Wales. The accommodation plus a dinner and Valentine's present costs £80 per person. Details: 01372 843933.

REGAL Hotels has launched its Leisure Options brochure of short breaks at 82 UK hotels, ranging from country house properties to coaching inns. Details: 0345 334400.

HOTEL L'Horizon in Jersey has a three-night package until the end of February available from Tuesday to Saturday at £250 per person, including dinner, beauty spa treatments and car hire. Details: 01534 43101.

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Do your sums on insurance

Even before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation into Britain's package holiday industry has got under way properly, it is clear that the focus will be on insurance.

Insurance cover dominated discussion in preliminary probing by the Office of Fair Trading. Other issues, such as the ownership of integrated groups of travel agencies, airlines and tour operators, grabbed the headlines but they pale in comparison with the obvious fact that additional costs are foisted on gullible customers.

But is the practice as bad as it seems? Is it better to opt for the insurance included in the total package or to buy it independently? On first scrutiny it would appear that there is a case for buying your own insurance, or taking advan-

age of that which many credit-card companies offer free if you use them to book.

Research by General Accident Direct shows that insurance bought with a holiday costs twice as much as the same policy bought from an insurance company.

For a family of four spending two summer weeks in Spain, travel agents quoted £115.32 compared with £43.06 for the same policy bought independently.

Travel agents make money by providing insurance cover, which enables them to offer discounts. The cost of a good insurance cover for two weeks in Spain is about £30 per head. But because the big travel agencies sell such policies to as many as 90 per cent of their clients, they get the cover for £10 a head. The £20 difference is then used to offer early booking discounts averaging around 10 per cent.

Lunn Poly, Britain's biggest travel agency, calculated the cost for two adults and two children booking two weeks in Puerto Pollensa, Mallorca, on August 3, from a First Choice brochure. Family A would pay £1,825.20 for the holiday, plus £115 for the Lunn Poly insurance. Because insurance was included in the package, they qualified for a 10 per cent discount on the holiday price, making the final bill £1,758.04.

Family B, making their own insurance arrangements or paying on a credit card which offered free insurance, would pay the basic £1,825.20. Those taking out direct insurance cover would pay a further £43.06, making a total of £1,868.26.

Family A would make a significant saving which may no longer be available if travel agents are forbidden to offer inclusive insurance. It is likely that the commission will recommend changes in the way that insurance is provided. We can only urge them, in their effort to "regularise" the business, not to do anything to swell the number of people who go on holiday without insurance cover, which stands at a worrying 10 per cent.

Tony Dawe reports on a world travel summit to boost employment and David Churchill looks at plans for Stonehenge

Industry sets target of 100 million new jobs

TRAVEL industry chiefs will discuss their "millennium vision" of creating 100 million new jobs in the industry worldwide at a summit meeting this weekend in the Algarve.

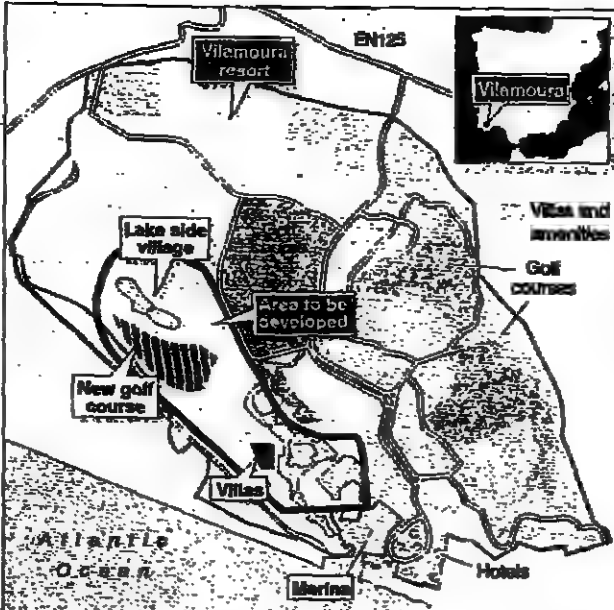
The meeting is at the resort of Vilamoura which aims to become "Europe's largest and most exciting leisure development" by the start of the 21st century. The plans for Vilamoura, already the largest of three Portuguese resorts developed from scratch, reflect the ambitions of the World Travel and Tourism Council which will be aired at the summit starting tomorrow.

The Vilamoura XXI project includes two new golf courses, an extra marina, a lakeside village and clusters of villas and apartments. The developers hope it will reawaken the interest of British tourists in the Algarve.

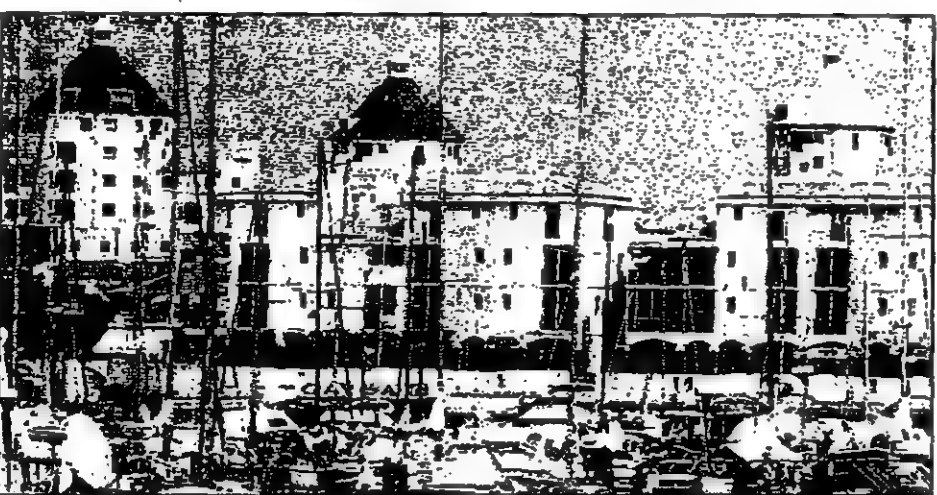
The tourism council, comprising more than 80 industry leaders, aims to encourage similar developments across the world and to press for more liberal "open skies" aviation policies and free trade, all of which will help ease unemployment.

"We can create millions of new jobs by opening up travel markets," says Geoffrey Lippman, the council president. "Travel and tourism drives more than 250 million jobs today across the world economy. We forecast a 40 per cent increase over the next decade as business and leisure demand consistently outpaces the general economy."

A report to be presented to the summit says that the concept of 100 million new jobs is ambitious yet achievable. "Travel spending and investment not only creates millions of jobs directly, but



also acts as a catalyst for employment in a myriad of other industries which support or supply travellers and travel companies," it says. Job opportunities will be created in industries ranging from air traffic control to hotel construction; from financial services to cruise-ship building; from farming to clothing manufacture and from telecommunications to retail trade.



Vilamoura: plans to improve villas, golf courses and other leisure facilities. See map top

André Jordan, chairman of the group which will be developing Vilamoura, says: "We focus on sustainable development, quality, local employment and training, and hope that our ideas can prove useful worldwide."

His plans will be studied closely by British tour operators who have been concerned that the existing resort, which can accommodate 35,000 tourists and is larger than Monaco, was beginning to look and feel "tired".

Since acquiring a major holding in the resort last year, the André Jordan group has retained one of three golf courses and begun work to improve the appearance of the resort. "The new project is a major challenge," says Gilberto Jordan, André Jordan's son. "We want to set new standards of design and provide a low-density mix of condominiums, clubs and individual villas, and also provide leisure facilities to suit everyone."



Stonehenge: the site is one of the most important megalithic monuments in Europe

Flintstone theme park

PLANS to build a Disney-style visitor attraction close to Stonehenge in time for the millennium celebrations are to be unveiled soon by English Heritage and the Tussauds Group, whose attractions include Madame Tussaud's in London and the Alton Towers theme park in Staffordshire.

The £42 million visitor complex is expected to include a number of sophisticated attractions showing the background and development of the prehistoric site on Salisbury Plain, one of the most important megalithic monuments in Europe and designated a World Heritage Site. The concept, which is still being finalised, could include audio-animatronic displays of Stonehenge under construction, to provide the anticipated two million tourists with a

practical idea of how it was constructed, roughly between 2500 and 1500BC.

The visitor complex will be located more than two miles from the stones and will be built mainly underground, with shops, restaurants and space for 3,000 cars.

Blending the complex into the landscape will be important, because plans to improve the A303 trunk road which passes the site are already causing an environmental row.

Above ground, the 4,000 acres around the stones are to be returned to something like their natural state, with all signs of modern living removed as far as possible. There will be an underground transport system to take visitors closer to the stones for viewing.

Although the National

Trust, which owns most of the surrounding land, and English Heritage are committed to manage the proposed Millennium Park via the formation of a Stonehenge Trust, the scheme still requires funding from the Millennium Commission's National Lottery resources as part of the Government's private finance initiative.

A final decision is expected this summer and, if the go-ahead is given, construction would start next year for completion in mid-2000.

Michael Jolly, the chief executive of the Tussauds Group, is confident of a sensitive development of the project. He says: "My company has extensive experience of restoring, interpreting, presenting and maintaining listed landscapes and heritage sites."

Sea France fires price-cut salvo

THE BATTLE for early ferry bookings on the Channel heated up this week when Sea France undercut P&O Ferries and Stena Line, its larger rivals, on sailings from Dover, Steve Keenan writes.

The French-owned carrier began a promotion offering any 1997 Dover-Calais crossing, including during school holidays, for £89 for a car and four passengers. Average brochure prices last summer were more than £320 for Friday and Saturday ferry crossings in school holiday weekends.

The move is in retaliation to

P&O, which offers any crossing from Dover for £99, and Stena, which reacted to P&O immediately with a £98 fare. Both the larger companies offer their fares for a car and up to nine passengers. The equivalent Sea France return is £95.

The Dover/Folkestone to Calais routes account for 80 per cent of all cross-Channel travel. Robin Wilkins, Sea France's managing director, pledged to match any lower fare this year. He said: "We are determined to lead the way in cross-Channel fares. The customer can't lose."

BRITANNY Ferries is spending £350,000 on a campaign to persuade Britons to revive their love affair with French gîte holidays. The fading appeal of gîtes saw sales from the biggest company in the market, Gîtes de France, fall from a peak of 100,000 three years ago to 20,000 in 1996.

Now Brittany Ferries has taken over the UK marketing and operations of the company and reduced the number of properties in a new brochure. It has cut prices by up to 47 per cent and is banking on the continuing rise of the pound to assist a turnaround in gîte holidays.

At, for example, £196 for five people for a week in a gîte, including ferry crossings, prices can be cheaper than a camping holiday in France or a UK cottage holiday, claims Brittany Ferries.

Reviving our love for gîte holidays

By STEVE KEENAN

Its staff have visited the 1,200 gîtes featured, and have designated some as "elite gîtes". Ian Carruthers, managing director of Brittany Ferries, said: "We have been able to make economies so that gîtes are on average 30-40 per cent cheaper."

The campaign will partly focus on the "friendliness" of gîte owners, and promote the range of properties — converted

farm buildings, cottages, old windmills, village houses, mountain chalets and manor houses. Gîte standards have improved as owners invested to stem their losses.

Bruno Leroy, president of Gîtes de France, said: "Some standards did slip but these incidents remain firmly in the past." The deal with Gîtes de France is described as a joint venture. But the London offices of Gîtes de France have been closed and Brittany Ferries has moved operations to Plymouth.

There are separate 1997 brochures for gîtes and holiday homes in France owned by Britons. The Holiday Homes brochure is already running 18 per cent ahead of 1996. And the company expects gîte holidays to reflect 22 per cent of its ferry carryings this year.

Eurocamp offers chance to dream

BRITAIN'S biggest overseas camping operator has acted to heed the demands of frazzled parents taking their children on holiday this summer, Steve Keenan writes.

The scenario of hyperactive children waking their parents at 6am is well known to families taking a two-week holiday in French campsites in Brittany or the Vendée. Now Eurocamp has redesigned 25 per cent of its mobile homes, placing the adults' bedroom 15ft away from the children's bunks, ensuring more peace and quiet, as well as making the beds bigger.

The £1 million redesign is the result of a customer survey by Eurocamp, which sells 100,000 camping and mobile-home holidays a year. Rosie Gerrard, a spokeswoman for the company, said: "Our customers demanded bigger beds and more privacy from their offspring."

More than 400 of the new mobile homes have been located on campsites throughout France and at a handful of sites in Italy. Prices for two-week holidays start at £410, rising to £1,250 in peak periods, for two adults and up to four children.

Mystery of the phantom booking

By JENNY KNIGHT

SOLICITOR Roger Hitch arranged a special treat for his wife Anita's 50th birthday — a weekend in London.

The GoldenRail package cost £563.50, including fares from Chichester, two nights' bed and breakfast and tickets

for Phantom of the Opera and By Jeeves. But when the couple arrived at the Mountbatten Hotel in Monmouth Street, they were told that the hotel was full, given £20 for taxi fares and sent to the Portman Hotel in St Marylebone.

Mr Hitch expressed concern that there may have been

a policy at the Mountbatten to ensure that their rooms were full by accepting bookings while feeling free to sell the rooms for a higher price if the opportunity arose.

"We wanted to stay in Covent Garden within walking distance of the theatres and the restaurant where we

have had arranged to have a Sunday lunch with family."

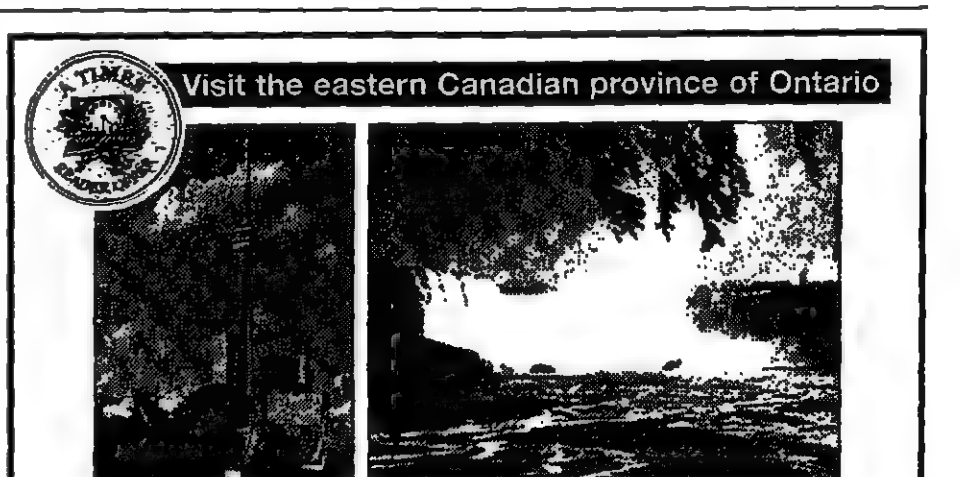
Although Mr Hitch had made his booking more than a month earlier, he was told by the hotel that his reservation had arrived from GoldenRail only a few days earlier.

Mr Hitch wrote to GoldenRail and received £50 in compensation. Customer relations manager Debbie Elliott replied: "I note the hotel advised that they did not receive details until a couple of days before booking. A fax is forwarded to the hotel automatically on the day the reservation is made."

David Bates, managing director of the Radisson Edwardian Hotels, of which Mountbatten is one, says: "It is absurd to suggest that this happened because of a policy to accept other bookings in preference to our weekend-break guests. Weekend breaks are a lucrative market."

"From time to time things go wrong. The tour operators were blameless. We have a policy to offer a better hotel, to make sure the transfer is smoothly accomplished and to offer compensation. We are sorry this happened."

Under the Package Travel Regulations, customers can pull out of contracts without penalty if a major change is made or accept the change and ask for compensation.



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Ireland reject bonus offer in bid to break losing run



Galthie: back for France

By DAVID HANDS

THE Ireland rugby authorities have turned down, with some distaste, the offer from a Dublin company of an £12,000 per man win bonus for the team that will play France at Lansdowne Road on Saturday, the first round of the five nations' championship. Not that recent history suggests the firm would be in danger of making such a payment.

In a move that echoes the offer made by a South African businessman to his national team during the 1995 World Cup, also rejected by South Africa's management, Cellular World, a mobile telephone company, took a full-page advertisement in *The Irish Times* yesterday in which the offer was made to those who start the match on Saturday.

Pat Whelan, the Ireland team manager, said there was little enthusiasm for the suggestion from within the squad, all of whom are on a £13,000 win bonus anyway as part of their Irish Rugby Football Union contracts. "The IRFU totally disassociates itself from the type of global marketing engaged in by Cellular World," a union statement said. "We regard it as in very poor taste."

Ireland have not beaten the French since 1983, and have been forced by injury to adjust their replacements: Gary Halpin and Paul Burke have withdrawn from the squad and their places go to Paul Flavin, the Blackrock College prop, and David Humphreys, of London Irish, who won three caps at stand-off half last season.

Fabien Galthie, the Colomiers scrum half capped 17 times since 1991, has been recalled for France in the absence of the injured Guy Acozberry, one of five changes in personnel from the XV that lost 13-12 to South Africa last month. Jean-Claude Skrela, the France coach, will turn to Galthie with some relief, having looked for a reliable No 9 since he took over the role.

Galthie, 27, damaged a wrist playing for Western Province after the 1995 World Cup and, when he came home, suffered an ankle injury. He made one appearance last year, as a replacement against Wales, but only this season has he recovered form and fitness sufficient to keep out Philippe Carboneau, who might otherwise have been

FIVE NATIONS



CHAMPIONSHIP

paired with Alain Penaud, his club colleague at Brive. Emile Ntamack and Thomas Castaignède return to the threequarters after injury, though only yesterday was the talented Castaignède able to confirm his fitness. A rib injury cost him six weeks' inaction before Toulouse's disappointing showing against

Leicester in the Heineken Cup and he received a further blow playing against Biarritz at the weekend.

Fabien Pelous is moved from lock to No 8, which allows another Toulouse, Hugues Miorin, back and the reshuffle to the back row costs Richard Castel his place. However, there is every likelihood of a substitution during the match on Saturday should the back row prove too slow to the breakdown.

Scotland's preparations for the game at Murrayfield with Wales were disrupted when Gregor Townsend withdrew from practice after hurting a shoulder. Townsend, who captained Scotland before Christmas in the absence of Rob Wainwright, will be given every opportunity to recover while Ronnie Eriksson stands

by to take his place at centre if required. "It was purely a precautionary measure," Arthur Hastie, the team manager, said. "We will take medical advice on the injury and give it as long as it needs."

England, who are not engaged in the first round of the championship, trained amid the fog at Bisham Abbey yesterday, though seven members of the 30-strong squad were sidelined by injury. However, Simon Shaw, the Bristol lock, who has been suffering from a recurring back problem, was not among them; he has been picked to play against Leicester on Saturday and hopes to establish his fitness after missing his club's past two league games.

The England team to play Scotland at Twickenham on February 1 will be announced

on Monday and Jason Leonard, who captained the side against Argentina last month, sounded a cautionary note. "We are going for a hat-trick of outright championship wins but I remember that, in 1993, we were in a similar position," the Harlequins prop said.

"We lost both our away matches that year so everybody needs a lesson in humility. You can't take anything for granted in this championship. The only time to talk about a grand slam is when you reach the last match with three wins behind you."

FRANCE: J-L. Sadourny (Colomiers), E. Ntamack (Toulouse), P. Carboneau (Brive), F. Pelous (Toulouse), A. Penaud (Brive), F. Galthie (Colomiers), C. Skrela (Toulouse), M. Dalmasso (Rugby F. Touraine), B. Bessis (Agen), O. Merle (Montauban), J. Mouton (Toulouse), P. Bessis (Agen), J. P. Pinaud (Agen), R. Wainwright (Leicester), S. G. G. (Bourges), C. Larmann (Brive), P. Carboneau (Brive), R. Castel (Biarritz), J-L. Jordano (Toulouse), R. Bessis (Agen)

Five of the best with everything to play for

Every championship is illuminated by a crop of players forging new reputations for themselves or enhancing their international credentials. Here David Hands, rugby correspondent, identifies this year's potential torch-bearers

ENGLAND

Simon Shaw
(lock)

UNDER other circumstances, Simon Shaw would already have had the experience of a World Cup under his belt rather than be poised to enter his first five nations' championship. But injury dictated that he would not go to South Africa in 1995 — as he did so successfully as a tour replacement for England a year earlier — and only this season has he finally scaled the international heights which then seemed there for the taking.

Yet, already, it seems as though he has been there for ages, forming with Martin Johnson what would appear to be a ready-made second row for the British Isles. If that seems a premature judgement, particularly in the light of England's mediocre display against Argentina last month, it is worth remembering all the good work Shaw achieved against Italy and the New Zealand Barbarians in the earlier games this season.

Shaw combines the best of the old England with the excitement of the new. At 6ft 5in and nearly 20st, he is very much a product of the early 1990s, when size was everything, aiding a good set-piece game so that the half backs

could move opponents around the field. But, as befits a former basketball player, he handles the ball well and moves about the field with impressive speed.

Though, at 23, he is only three years younger than Johnson, he could not have a better teacher: where Shaw came comparatively late to rugby, Johnson learnt, from two seasons in New Zealand, the need for physical and mental durability and now sets a wonderful example of perpetual motion. Shaw, too, recognises the need to contribute in any area of the field and, providing injury does not intervene once more — he has recovered from a double dislocation and fracture of the left ankle which left his playing career in doubt and hopes that a back injury will not prevent him playing against Scotland — England need look no further for their locks.

If, at any stage, England need to seek the security of their tight forwards — and you would not bet against it — then they can do so without hesitation. Johnson can command the front of the line and Shaw's bulk and athleticism make him almost immovable in the middle.

He benefits from playing with Mark Regan, his club hooker, and when he leans more into the tackle he will be that much harder to bring down. He should become the next in a long line of outstanding England locks.



Shaw combines the best of the old England with the excitement of the new

WALES

Scott Gibbs
(centre)

WHEN Scott Gibbs became the first British player to return to international rugby from rugby league (against Italy in October) he seemed singularly unimpressed by the occasion. It was, he suggested, a job of work rather than an historic milestone and he would be happy to take the win bonus and return home with the satisfaction of a job well done.

We all look for some romance from our sporting heroes, sometimes more than they are capable of providing, but the last thing Wales need now is sentimentality. They need pragmatism, they need successive victories and in recalling Gibbs and his colleagues from rugby league, Allan Bateman, Scott Quinnell and David Young, pragmatism is what they will get.

Gibbs has applied himself to a job of work with St Helens for three years, after a union career that looked so full of promise. Now that he has returned to union, again with Swansea in his old position of centre, he brings a maturity which at one stage seemed hard to find but which was obvious in his public utterances during his temporary occupation of the captaincy against the United States.

His will be a comfortable presence alongside young Arwel Thomas, but he will bring organisation to the Welsh midfield and an attacking threat, typified by the odd deft show of the ball and acceleration off the mark which will keep his support on its toes. In addition there is 15st 7lb of Gibbs, a solidity



Gibbs favours the pragmatic approach for Wales

which will give his back row a target to aim at. Strength in the middle of the field is so vital a quality if Wales are to attack successfully off second phase and give Thomas his head.

Not only that, Gibbs and Bateman complement each other. In their former union existence neither played with each other: indeed it was Bateman's departure to Warrington that left the vacancy in 1991 for Gibbs, the younger man by nearly six years. If Gibbs is the showier player, it is Bateman who offers many

of the unappreciated skills which make others look better competitors.

There may be those in Wales who believe that the other Scott, Quinnell, may become a nation's saviour but there are plenty of strong, hard, mobile forwards in the five nations. Wales will not dominate in that area so they need to exploit whatever chances come their way and that is where Gibbs and his colleagues are so important to the wide game which Kevin Bowring wants his team to play.

FRANCE

Thomas Castaignède
(centre)

ON THE face of it there seems little that Thomas Castaignède cannot do, yet this will be a significant season for the young centre from Toulouse. Little more than a year ago he sprang to prominence as a 20-year-old, surprising and bewitching us with his precocious talent and the infectious pleasure he took from playing that most serious of games, international rugby.

Now his opponents know all about him: they have watched the videos, they have studied the chemistry student and life will be twice as difficult as in his first season. Not only that, injury has disrupted the first half of this season and Castaignède needs to pick up the threads quickly in a French side still pondering a series defeat by South Africa.

Yet he has a good base of experience, even for one so young. Appearances in three successive French club finals indicate the faith Toulouse place in his composure and only this month, in the



Castaignède: precocious

Heineken Cup semi-final against Leicester to accept it. He has played rugby since he was five, he has learnt well — not least by playing alongside the tricky Christophe Deylaud for Toulouse — and life is still an adventure. In such a state of mind, risks are merely the obvious things to take and Castaignède's capacity for the unexpected should light up the championship.

either foot and the pace with which he accelerates into the gap.

Not only that, he can score in every conceivable way. In his ten appearances he has collected 80 points from tries and every variety of kick — England, in particular, will recall his ability to drop goals since it was one such that beat them in the Parc des Princes a year ago. No wonder he has been the focal point of offers from the wealthier English clubs.

Yet France's needs come first. Under the direction of Jean-Claude Skrela they have enjoyed mixed success, their confidence is fragile and they need the arrogance of youth that Castaignède and his partner last season, Richard Dourthe, can offer. It is vital for their success that Castaignède copes with the additional pressures placed upon him.

Such responsibility on the small (5ft 9in) frame of a student, yet few doubt his capacity to accept it. He has played rugby since he was five, he has learnt well — not least by playing alongside the tricky Christophe Deylaud for Toulouse — and life is still an adventure. In such a state of mind, risks are merely the obvious things to take and Castaignède's capacity for the unexpected should light up the championship.

IRELAND

Eric Miller
(No 8)



Miller: good hands

THE old song in which "the Joe bones" connected to the ankle bone, and so on, could have been made for rugby. All the parts are inter-related: one will not function well without the other. Thus, if one proclaims that success or failure in rugby hinges on the back row and half-back pairing, that is only relative.

Ireland are in the business of putting together a new back row, whose success will depend upon a steady platform from the tight forwards. If, though, they can hold their own, the progress made by Eric Miller, a young Dubliner, in the forthcoming championship will be illuminating for his speed, strength and ball-handling capacity should influence Ireland's fortunes.

Miller, 21, a student at Loughborough, played his

first international against Italy earlier this month and, since he turned an ankle after half-an-hour, was reduced to a dismayed onlooker as Ireland were outscored by four tries to one. He was selected on the open-side flank, but, against France on Saturday, he will play No 8, the position in which he proved so impressive for Leicester against Harlequins just after Christmas.

Hard-nosed critics at Welford Road believe that his legs sometimes outrun his head, but there could be no better finishing school, Bob Dwyer, the club coach, and Ian Smith, his assistant, played their rugby in the back row and Miller — who has

appeared in all three positions for his club — will not go short of advice.

His talent lies in a typically forthright Irish approach, the strength to breach the gain line and hands good enough to ensure continuity. That, at 6ft 3in, he is not the tallest of men should not matter in these days of "supporting", what is more significant is his pace over the ground and his ability to read the game, and he could have no better mentor than Dean Richards.

An all-round games player (Miller has played junior representative cricket, football and Gaelic football), he also has an old-fashioned pride in the country of his birth. "Ireland is the greatest place in the world and you never really appreciate it until you've been away," he said. "The green is still in me and always will be." That is a quality which Irish Ireland are in need just now.

SCOTLAND

Andy Reed
(lock)

WOULD Andy Reed have become an international sportsman if he and rugby union had not come together? The chances are he would not, yet the softly-spoken Cornishman has so frequently produced the goods on a rugby field, whether for Bath, for Scotland and now for Wasps. Moreover he was resolute enough to grasp a place in the British Isles XV which played New Zealand in the first international of the 1993 series.

There is a very strong streak running through the man who played in goal for Cornwall Schools, and depth of character is what Scotland require after an uneasy pre-Christmas period. The depth that drove Reed to imitate his then colleague, Graham Dawe, and fling up and down to Bath on a six-hour round trip for training regularly, or which has kept him going through some two years of back problems.

Some might have opted out but Reed, for all that his international record reads only 11 caps in four years, has soldiered on. When he was picked to play against Italy last month he said: "Earlier this year I was wondering whether I would ever play again, let alone for my country." Yet here he is, scoring tries for Wasps in the first division and locking the Scotland pack which, it is easy to forget, he led during the 1994 season before moving on to captain the team that toured Argentina the same year.

It would be fair to say that Bath's demanding routines brought the best out of Reed who now, at 27, is in a position to influence significantly the work of the Scottish tight five. At 6ft 7in he is not short of



Reed: mobile and resolute

physical presence and few have the better of him at the lineout; but it is his sustained mobility about the field that Scotland will prize. A big man, comfortable with the ball in hand, running at opponents.

This is where the Scots have so frequently fallen down, most notably against England. They have been unable to oppose force with force but in Reed — whose mother was born in Edinburgh and whose grandparents are Scottish, even if his own life has been lived entirely in England — they possess a skilled technician who can hold his own as a middle jumper and add some 18st to the scrum. Reed will also offer Scotland greater security at the important area of restarts, which is sometimes overlooked by British teams. The most secure of catchers, he will also challenge the opposition for possession in the same way that Martin Johnson does so effectively for England. As they have proved before, given a steady platform the Scotland backs can make opponents hop about and Reed should give just that stability.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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RUGBY UNION 40

France ring changes at scrum-half by recalling Galthié



Briton primed to play match of his life against second-seeded American

Henman plots aggressive way forward

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN MELBOURNE

TIM HENMAN claims, without exaggeration, that he is playing the best tennis of his life. Tomorrow, when he challenges Michael Chang for a place in the quarter-finals of the Australian Open, people will know just how good his best is. If he beats the man seeded second behind Pete Sampras, he is entitled to think that he is scholarship material.

In and out of the rain yesterday, he outclassed Guillaume Raoux, of France, 6-3, 6-3, 6-4 to set up a meeting he is eagerly awaiting. "The way to beat him," Henman said, "is to be aggressive. I make errors, but I have nothing to lose. He is the No 2 player in the world and I am going to go out there and give it everything." Now Henman must underline those fine words with deeds.

Raoux, gracious in defeat, saw enough from the other end of the court to supply an unconditional endorsement. "All the rubbish has been cleared out of his game," he said. "He can certainly worry Chang. He uses 100 per cent of his potential and has a great feeling for matchplay." If he stays away from drink and drugs, the Frenchman said, somewhat perplexingly, he can go all the way.

The main obstacle to

Henman's progress yesterday was the variable weather, for which Melbourne is famous. The heat of the first two days gave way to windy conditions and, when the rain came during the fifth game of the first set, with Henman leading 3-1, the players were driven off court for two hours. It failed to break the Englishman's concentration, for he won the first set in 31 minutes, and resolved the next two without much argument.

The clinical manner of



Chang: serving better

Henman's victory impressed his coach, David Felgate. "Tim had a job to do and did it," Felgate said. "It was delightful to watch him give one of his best displays in a grand-slam event."

Jeremy Bates, whom Henman succeeded as British No 1, and David Lloyd were in the crowd, as was a platoon from the tennis equivalent of the Barry Army. They were ready to cheer every point and, when the players were off court, they were more than happy to direct the waving and "humorous" chanting. Overall, though, they were in order. Should Henman reach the final, there will probably be a company out here.

Henman was not complaining about their conduct. "It was a great atmosphere. It's a bit different from Wimbledon, people are more vocal with the songs. When you are playing, you hit a good shot, glance at the crowd, and they respond. It gives you a big lift."

He has now won 11 out of 12 matches this year, losing only to Jim Courier in the final of the Qatar Open and winning his first ATP title, and is still pinching himself at the transformation that has taken place. "The last 2½ weeks have flown by," Henman said. "It doesn't seem so long since I was getting off the plane in Doha, but it is not in my nature to get carried away with things."

He is the first British player to reach the third round of this tournament since Bates lost to Pat Cash in 1989. Ahead of him lies the achievement of John Lloyd, who contested the final against Vitas Gerulaitis 20 years ago, and he appears to be coping sensibly with the growing sense of expectation. In his public pronouncements he has a very English sense of understatement but now, after his success in Sydney last weekend, even journalists from other countries are beginning to pay attention.

Henman recalled yesterday that, when Chang won the French Open in 1989, he was playing in a "minor tournament" in Italy. "He serves a lot better than he used to, but I feel that, if I can be aggressive, then I can be the dictator." Unfortunately, his Oxonian manner contradicts this attempt at bluster. Henman is no more a dictator than a conductor clipping tickets on the last bus to Woodstock.



Henman drives a high forehand during his summary dismissal of Raoux in the second round yesterday

Chang, a 6-3, 7-5, 6-4 victor over Richey Reneberg yesterday, was the beaten finalist here last year and is attempting to win his first grand-slam title since the French Open in 1989. However, Henman is confident he has a good chance when the two meet for the first time tomorrow.

"It is a confidence thing and obviously, having won seven matches in a row, I feel confident," Henman said. "But you can't take that for granted. You have to keep working on your game from day to day. The conditions today were not favourable but it was a case of going out there

and getting on with it. I was able to keep the momentum going from set to set. I don't think my preparation (for Chang) can be any better. If I continue serving in the same form, I stand a good chance."

Bryan's Eye, page 42
Unhappy Sampras, page 42

Arsenal tempt teenager from French

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

ARSENAL have signed Nicolas Anelka, the young Paris Saint-Germain striker. Though virtually unknown in England, he is highly rated in France and his progress has been closely monitored by Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, for several months. Anelka, 17, will join the north London club at the end of the season on a two-year contract with a further two-year option. He has been unhappy with his limited first-team opportunities at Saint-Germain, for whom he has scored only one goal this season — against Lens in September.

"People don't show enough confidence in me," he said. "In France, there are other young players who play in the big teams. They've had their chance. I'm the only one who has played in only one full match. I'm not leaving for the money; I'm leaving to play."

Wenger has apparently promised Anelka a leading role in the side next season. "I have been assured that I would be on level terms with the other forwards," the French teenager said. Perhaps Ian Wright, Dennis Bergkamp and John Hartson will have differing views.

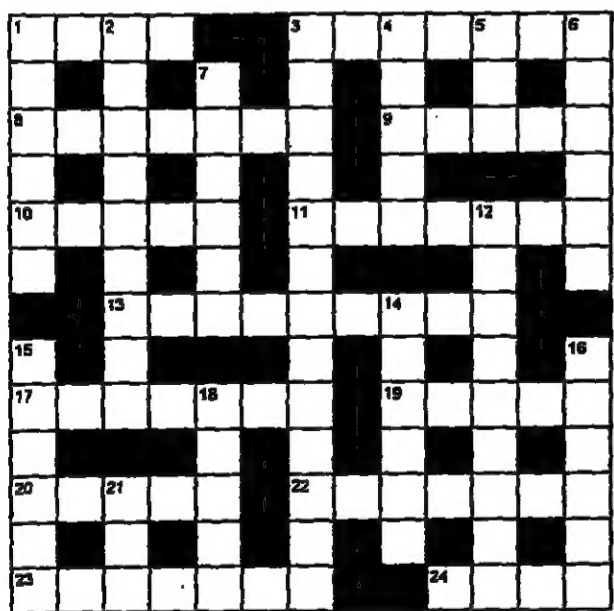
The French club had offered Anelka a six-year contract but he turned it down. Once Wenger made his interest known, French Football Federation regulations state that an apprentice must sign his first professional contract with his first club, but there is no such law governing the movement of players between European clubs. As yet, no fee for the move to Highbury has been agreed.

West Ham United are still hoping to sell Florin Radu, their Romanian forward, back to Espanol, of Spain. They were trying to push through the deal last night before the Spanish transfer "window" closed for the season.

If the deal went through successfully, it would give West Ham extra bargaining power in their attempts to sign Pierre van Hooijdonk, the Holland and Celtic striker. Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager, watched van Hooijdonk play for Celtic in their 2-1 win against Raith Rovers on Tuesday night, but has yet to make a firm offer.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 992 in association with BRITISH MIDLAND



ACROSS

- 1 An army: a party-giver (4)
- 3 Small falcon (7)
- 8 Prince, chose gold casket (M of V) (7)
- 9 Eg potato root (5)
- 10 Name (of eg book) (5)
- 11 Engagingly attractive (7)
- 13 Gangster chief (9)
- 17 Rips veil off (7)
- 19 A parable: worse (anag.) (5)
- 20 Chinese black/white animal (5)
- 22 Tribal chief (7)
- 23 Member of white-rope party (7)
- 24 Reverse effects of (4)

DOWN

- 1,15 Egg that sat on a wall (6,6)
- 2 Ploy (9)
- 3 Be worldly wise (4,5,4)
- 4 The Devil (5)
- 5 Difficulty: polish (3)
- 6 Panty (6)
- 7 Smooth cement floor (6)
- 12 Lady rower (9)
- 14 Light cavalryman (6)
- 15 See 1 dn
- 16 Untamed (US) horse (6)
- 18 Hindu holy man (5)
- 21 And not (9)

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ACROSS: 1 Rhapody 5 Echo 8 Platform 9 Mast
11 Asile 12 Sponsor 13 Labial 15 Censor 18 Panacea
19 Oiler 21 Ally 22 Insecure 23 Taxi 24 Analysis
DOWN: 1 Raphael 2 Anxious 3 Suffrance 4 Diness
6 Chassis 7 Outer 10 Come to heel 14 Belux 16 Reprise
17 Cannon 18 Flail 20 Louis

Clubs angered by postponements

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

CLUBS, managers and supporters were left incensed again last night when two more FA Cup matches were called off at the last moment. West Ham United's third-round replay against Wrexham at Upton Park was cancelled because of fog with less than two hours to kick-off.

Supporters travelling to Woking's delayed third-round tie against Coventry City at Highfield Road had only 55 minutes' notice before their match was postponed because of a frozen pitch. Gerald Ashby, the match referee, decided that the surface would not last for the full duration after being informed that the temperatures were likely to drop further.

On Tuesday night, Manchester City's game against Brentford at Griffin Park was called off at 5.30pm. Many City supporters were already outside the ground and, yesterday, City lodged a formal complaint with the Football Association.

Bernard Halford, the City secretary, said: "There should have been more consideration given to the prevailing weather conditions and also to the travelling fans who had to travel long distances."

Mick Fletcher, the match referee, left his home in West Bromwich at 3pm. He arrived

at the ground three hours before kick-off but, after two inspections, called it off. "When I left home, I was told the pitch was playable. I don't think Brentford were anticipating the temperature would drop so severely. I looked at the pitch at 5.30 and one side was badly affected by frost. I appreciate the fans had travelled a long way but players' safety is first on the agenda."

With little sign of a let-up in the bad weather, the FA Cup fourth round has been thrown into logistical chaos. Some third-round ties will not be completed before January 25 — the date of the fourth round — and, already, two fourth-round matches, still dependent on delayed matches and replays to determine the opponents, have been put back to February 4.

The Brentford-Manchester City game will now be played on January 25, as will the replay between Leeds United and Crystal Palace, who drew 2-2 at the first attempt. The delayed third-round games featuring Luton Town v Bolton Wanderers and Watford v Oxford United, plus the re-staging of the abandoned match between Gillingham and Derby County, will go ahead next Tuesday. If replays are required, they will also be on January 25.

Strachan plans to punish Dublin

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

DION DUBLIN, of Coventry City, is to be disciplined by the club after being sent off in successive FA Cup Premier League matches. Dublin has been suspended for seven matches by the FA after being dismissed against Sunderland at Highfield Road and at Blackburn Rovers on Saturday.

Dublin, who has been switched to the centre of defence from his customary forward role recently, has upset Gordon Strachan, the Coventry manager, with the nature of the offences. Against Sunderland he was dismissed for retaliation and against Blackburn for a reckless challenge on Henning Berg.

Strachan said: "He has put me in a position where I will have to take some disciplinary action. I haven't decided what and I won't be in a hurry." Middlesbrough are still considering whether to appeal over the three-point deduction imposed upon them by a Premier League inquiry into the postponement of the game against Blackburn Rovers. The club will not make a decision until it has read the report of the disciplinary commission.

Bryan Robson, the manager, said: "I think it is the harshest sentence they could possibly have given us. We

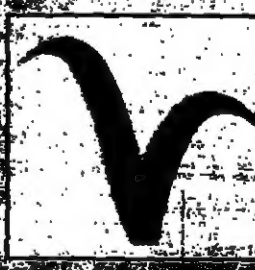
will wait for the report of the hearing to come through and we will make a decision once we have read it."

Middlesbrough council has passed an emergency resolution, urging the Premier League to reconsider their decision. Councillor John Jones said: "Tickets for Premier League matches are expensive. Supporters should expect to see the best both sides can offer."


Fabrizio Ravanelli, the Middlesbrough forward, insisted yesterday that reports from Italy suggesting he had said the club was certain to be relegated had been exaggerated. "Middlesbrough are in a bad situation because we are at the bottom of the table. But I did not say anything about relegation," Ravanelli said.

Chelsea yesterday admitted making an inquiry about Paolo Maldini, the AC Milan defender, but laughed off suggestions of a £17 million bid for the player. Colin Hutchinson, the Chelsea managing director, said the approach had been "tongue in cheek".

Claus Thomsen, the Denmark midfielder, will join Everton from Ipswich Town for £900,000 today. Bradford City completed the signing of Gordon Watson, the forward, from Southampton for a club record £550,000 yesterday.



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